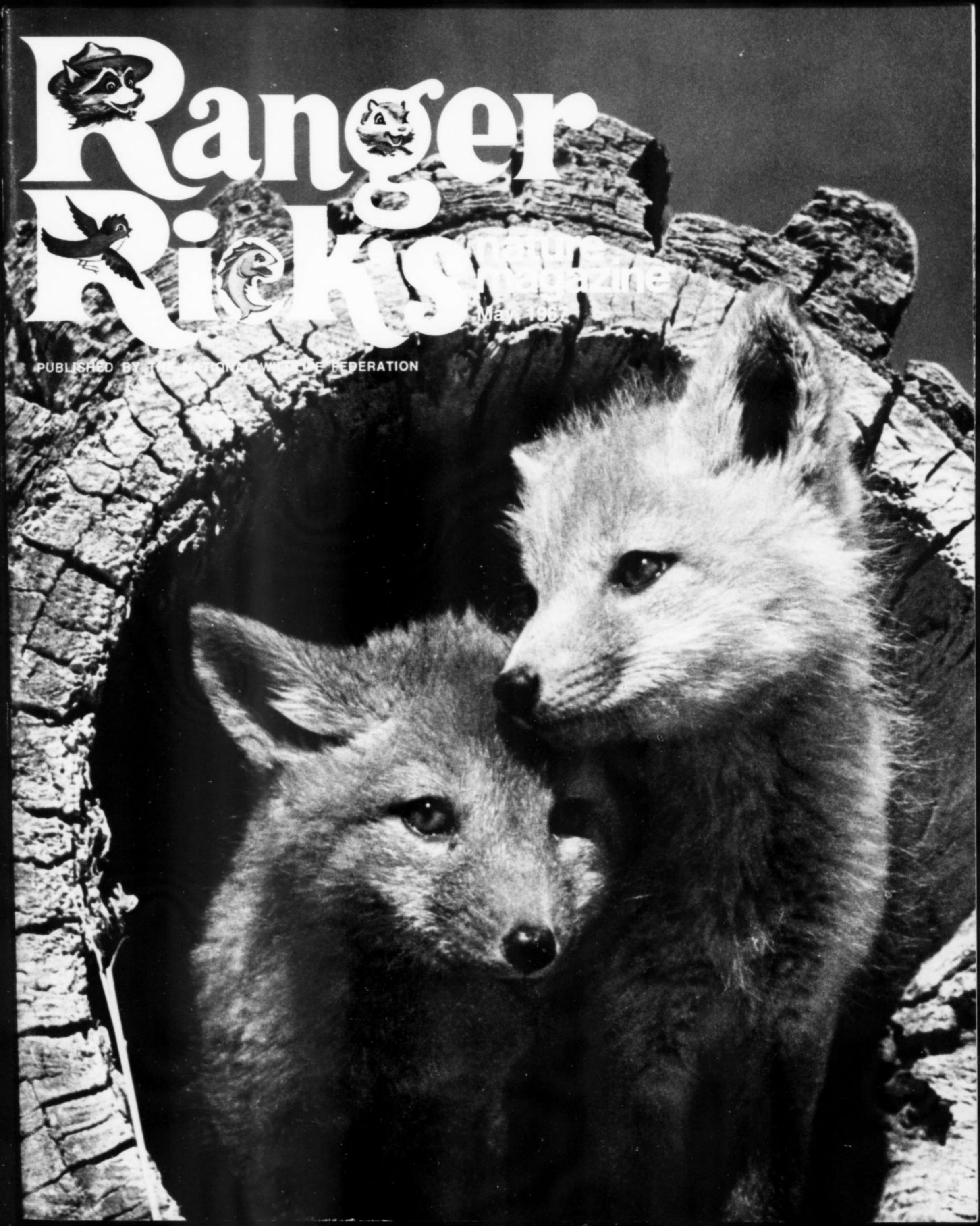
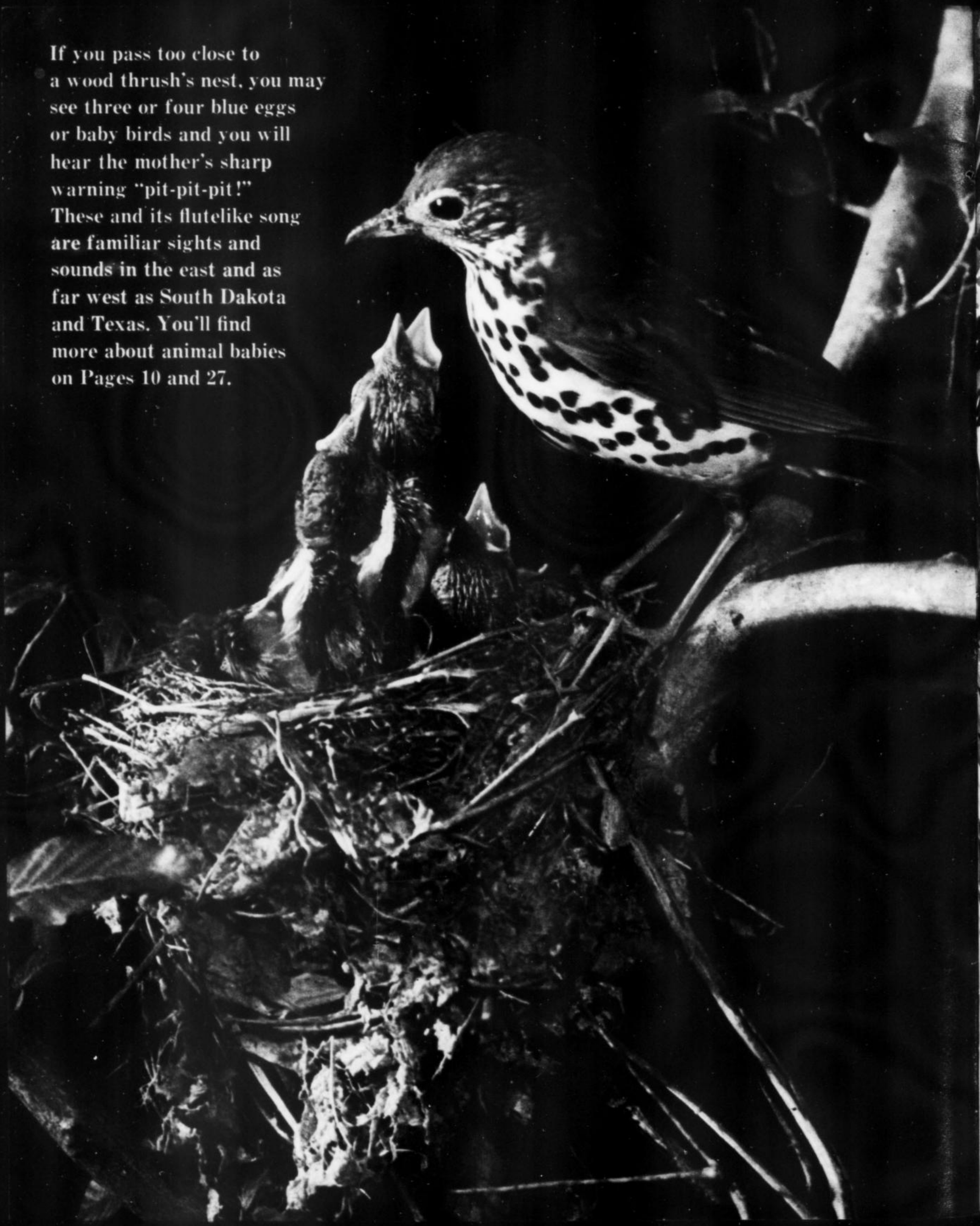
Ranger Rick's Nature Magazine

May 1983

PUBLISHED BY THE NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION



If you pass too close to a wood thrush's nest, you may see three or four blue eggs or baby birds and you will hear the mother's sharp warning "pit-pit-pit!" These and its flutelike song are familiar sights and sounds in the east and as far west as South Dakota and Texas. You'll find more about animal babies on Pages 10 and 27.



OBJECTIVES: To give boys and girls a year-round program of activities, adventure and knowledge which will help them appreciate and enjoy nature. To help them know and respect all things that grow and creatures that move, that all may desire to conserve and wisely use the vital natural resources of the world.

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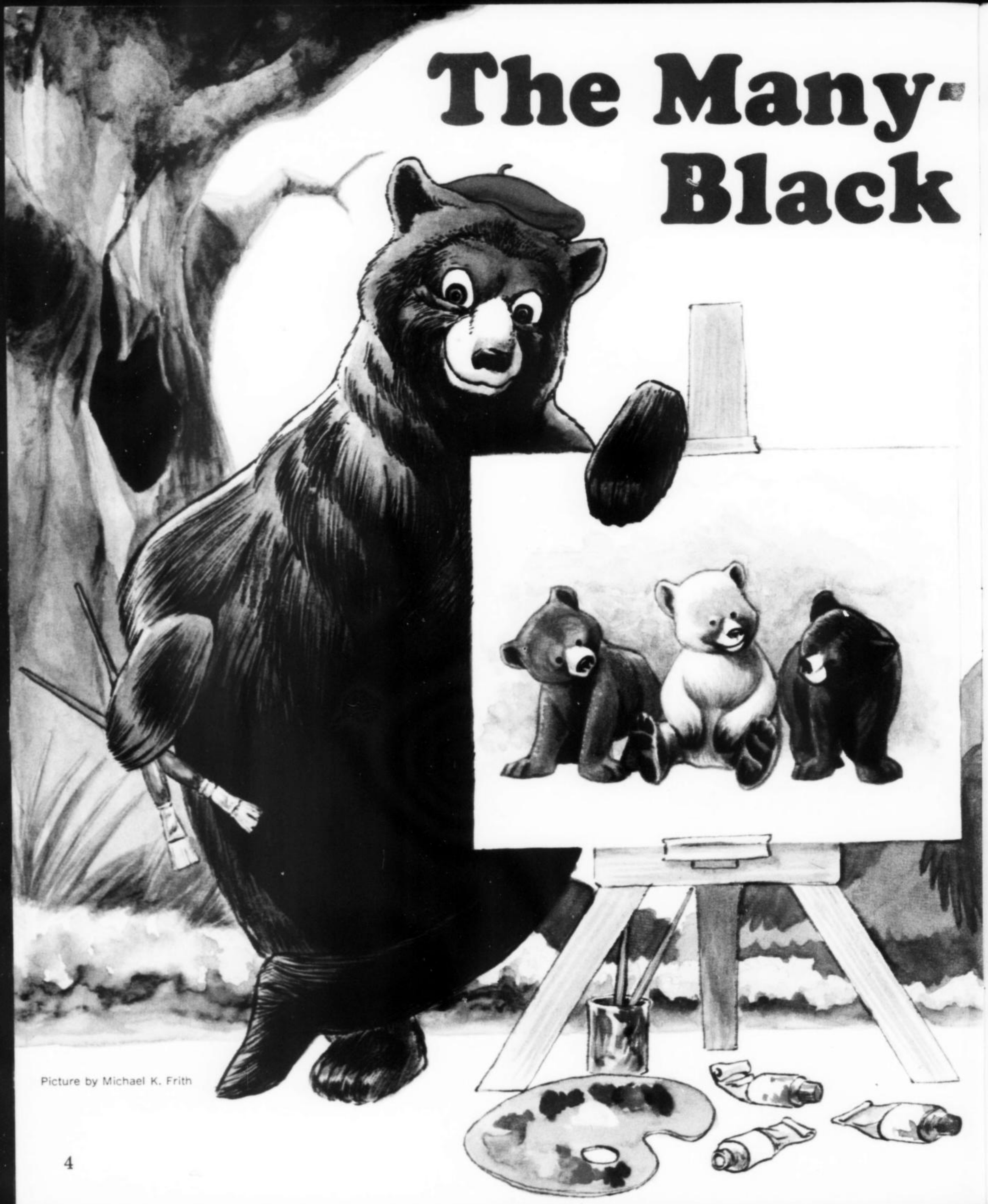
The Many-
Black



Picture by Michael K. Frith

Colored Bear

by Byron W. Dalrymple

When is a black bear *not* a black bear? Quite often the answer is: "When it's a brown bear or even a blond bear!"

Black bear is the name of a kind, or species, of bear different from other species such as polar bears or grizzlies. It is the kind you are most likely to see begging for food beside the road in one of our western national parks.

The so-called black bear ranges over more of our continent than any other of our large animals. It also wears coats of more colors than any other. You might see one in any shade from jet black to pale golden blond. Thus, this most common of North American bears is possibly the most misnamed of all our animals.

One summer I spent a month photographing black bears in western national parks. Sometimes I saw as many as ten bears of varying shades of brown before I located a single black bear that was really black. One day I even saw a chocolate-colored mother bear with two cute little cubs. One was jet black and the other one was a honey blond.

Probably the black bear gained that name because early colonists in the eastern part of our country killed bears to get meat and fur and to protect their domestic animals from the bears that liked to gobble up a pig or a calf. These bears *were* black except for a dark brown or lighter-colored nose, or muzzle, and often a few white hairs or a white spot on the throat or chest. Even this varies greatly. I once saw one whose whole chest was pure white.

When pioneers moved west across the Mississippi and finally into the Rocky Mountains and on to the Pacific Coast, they began seeing bears that looked the same but were many shades of brown. They called these animals "cinnamon bears." They believed these bears were another kind or species.

They also saw bears that were black, just like the ones back home. But what puzzled them was that often a brown and a black bear would be seen roaming around together. Could it be that the two species crossed?

At last it was discovered that these bears—eastern and western, blonds, brunets, redheads—were all one kind. Much

Please turn the page

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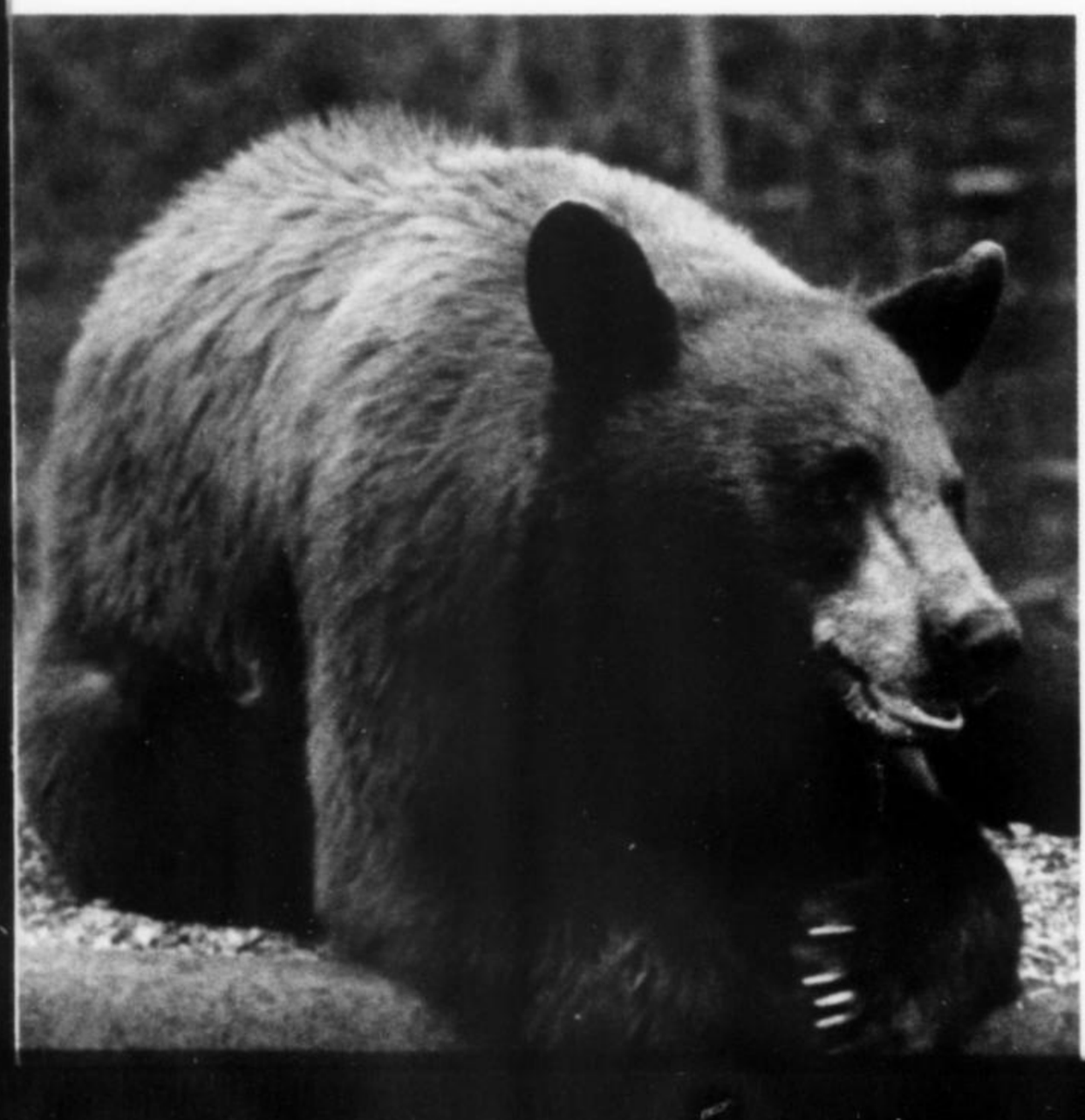
The bears on these pages are all black bears in spite of their different colors and sometimes they "picnic" as in the photo at the right in Yellowstone National Park.



like kittens or puppies in the same litter, they simply wore different colors. And so the name by which they were first called became the official one—black bear. The tans, browns, cinnamons and yellows are color "phases" of the species.

The brown and lighter shades seldom appear east of the Mississippi. They are most common throughout the Rockies and into the Northwest. In Alaska where the black-bear species is abundant, most of them really are black in color. But there is, in southeastern Alaska, a bear known as the "glacier bear" that isn't black. Its color varies from pale smoke to bluish-gray to a dark iron-gray. It is also called a "blue bear," but when black cubs turned up as offspring, it proved to be just one more of the many-colored black-bear species.

The most astonishing black bear of all lives on several islands along the rugged, foggy coast of British Columbia. Many years ago explorers reported seeing "ghost" bears that faded into the moss-draped thickets. In 1900 a puzzled New York fur buyer showed a white bearskin from British Columbia to the director of the New York Zoological Park. It was not the skin of a polar bear. Could it be an albino black bear? An expedition went to British Columbia and a man named Kermode traced this original skin to an Indian who had brought it in from the area of Princess Royal Island.

In time a few of these white bears were found. They were not albinos. You guessed it! They were a rare color phase of the black bear. If you ever visit the Denver Museum of Natural History or museums in Kansas City or Detroit, you may be able to see a mounted specimen of the Kermode black bear that is really white.

The End

Photos by Byron W. Dalrymple

Photo by Grant Heilman

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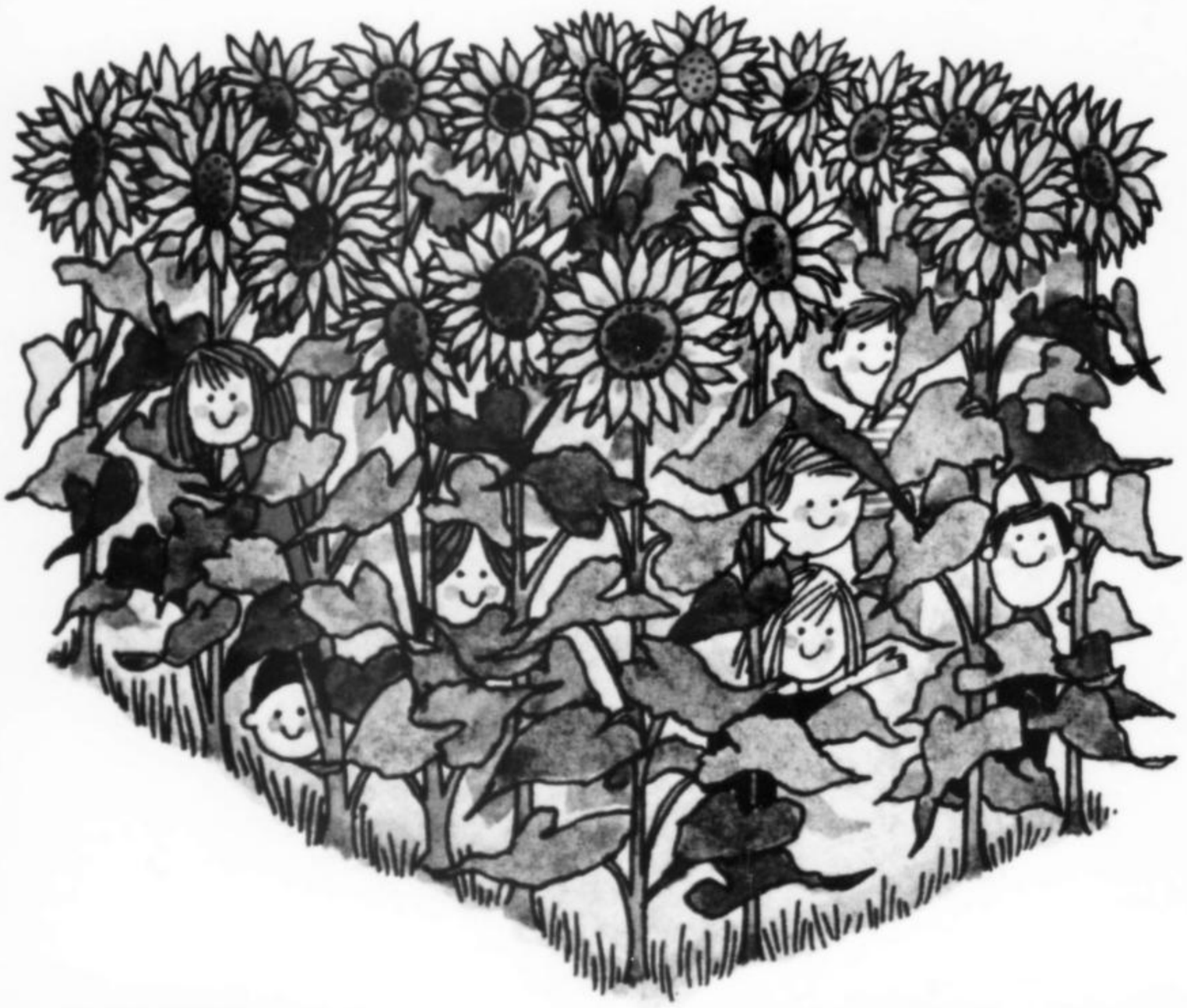

PLANT NOW...

by Sara B. Murphey

SUNFLOWERS and gourds are easy to grow; but plant them where you want them to remain, for they are not easy to transplant. Wait to plant them until all frost is out of the ground. The seeds will not sprout in cold, wet soil. Test the soil by pressing it firmly in your hand. It should not be heavy and sticky but should crumble easily.

Sunflowers like to grow in full sunlight. They do not need rich soil and are not

GOURD vines grow quickly and may be trained on trellises for shade or on fences to screen out unwanted views. A shady place to play can be made by planting gourd seeds around a tepee-shaped frame made of bean-poles.

A seed packet of mixed ornamentals is full of surprises. The hard-shelled fruit comes in all sizes and many shapes, colors and patterns. Interesting special varieties to look for in seed catalogs are turk's turban, Indian war club, crown of thorns, calabash pipe and big dipper.

Hey Rangers!

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bothered by heat or dry weather. The most common ones grow as tall as seven feet and may have blossoms twenty or more inches across. (That's twice as big as your dinner plate.) They look best planted in a clump in the corner of a yard, or along a fence, two to three feet apart.

Many school grounds have ideal spots for planting sunflowers. Their golden blossoms come along in September, in time to welcome everybody back to school,

→

and they last into October. The seeds will attract birds and may inspire bird-study projects—including building feeders for the winter birds, planting berry-bearing shrubs and later making birdhouses.

For summer fun in your own back yard, plant a sunflower playhouse in a sunny fence corner. Sow the seeds about six inches apart in the form of a square, leaving space for a "door." In the fall you will want to gather and save the sunflower seeds for your bird feeder.

Pictures by Jack Weaver

FOR FUN LATER

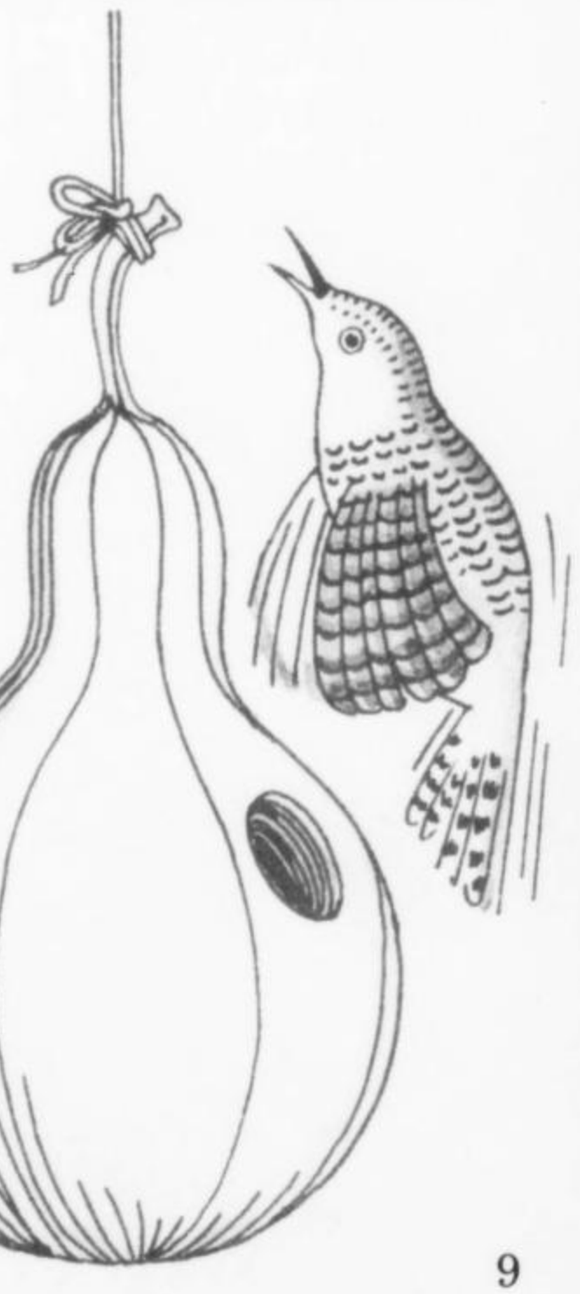
Gourds need sunshine but do not need very rich soil. Plant several seeds together and cover them with half an inch of soil. Space the groups six or more inches apart. When seedlings are about 3-inches tall, thin out except the best two in each spot.

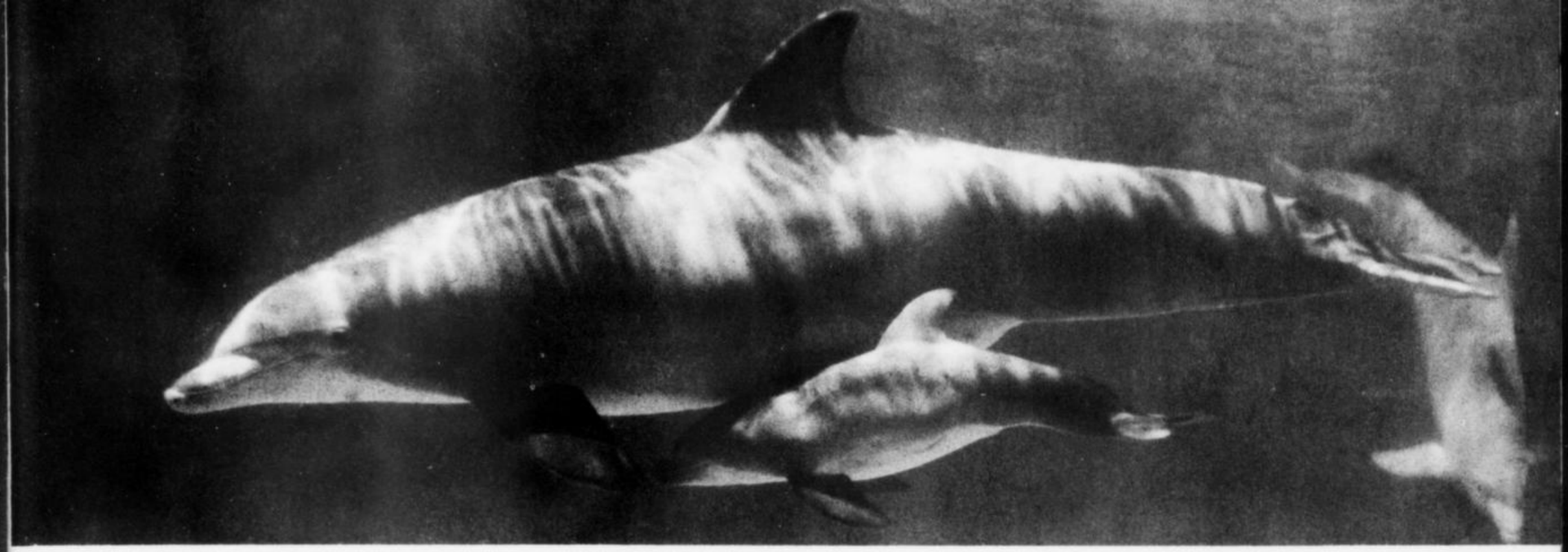
The fruits ripen in the early fall. They are ready to pick when the stems are brown and woody. Gather them before frost by cutting them from the vine with a section of stem attached. Hang them indoors in a cool, airy place until they are completely dry. Then they

→

can be used "as is," or rubbed with furniture wax, shellacked, enameled, painted or carved. A bowl of assorted gourds makes a handsome Thanksgiving centerpiece. Big dipper gourds are often used for birdhouses. Other kinds, depending on their size and shape, make interesting bowls, hanging baskets, rattles and amusing animal figures, especially penguins.

Pumpkins and popcorn are two other things to plant soon to have for parties next Halloween. Read and carefully follow directions on the seed packets. *The End*





1. *The dolphin mother swims with her young.*

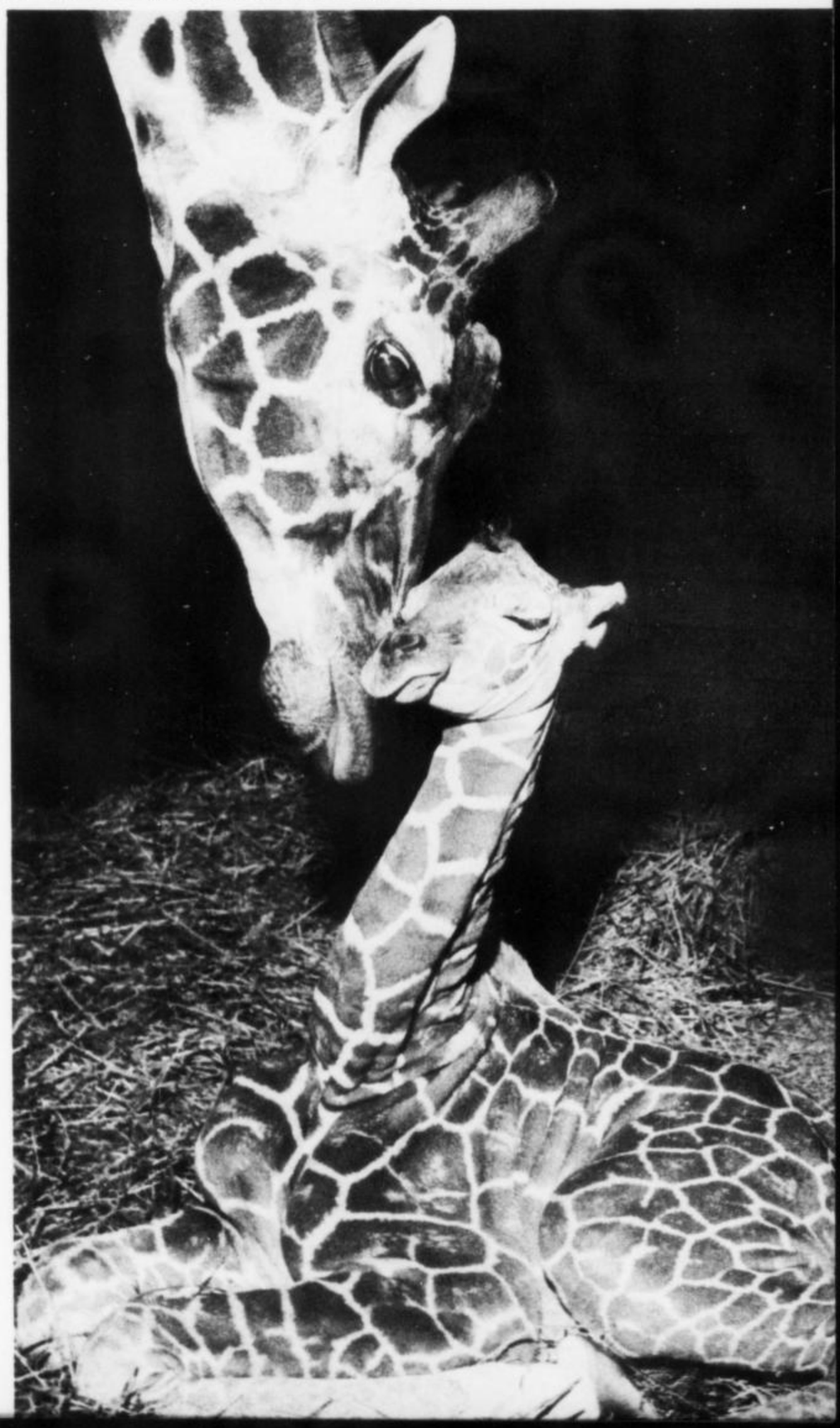
MA and ME

Animal mothers nearly always take tender, loving care of their babies, just as most human mothers do. Nature has made the fiercest lions or tigers soft and gentle with their cubs. And small, timid birds fight bravely to protect their babies should any danger come near the nest. If you have a pet cat or dog and she has had babies, you have seen for yourself what good mothers animals can be.

Please turn the page

3. *A mama monkey with her nursling.*

2. *Mama giraffe nuzzles her calf.*



4. *The fallow deer baby prances behind its mother.*

5. *Baby seal sunning with mother.*

6. *Opossum babies cling to mama.*

7. *Baby giant panda naps at the zoo.*

8. *Young emperor penguins learn to walk.*

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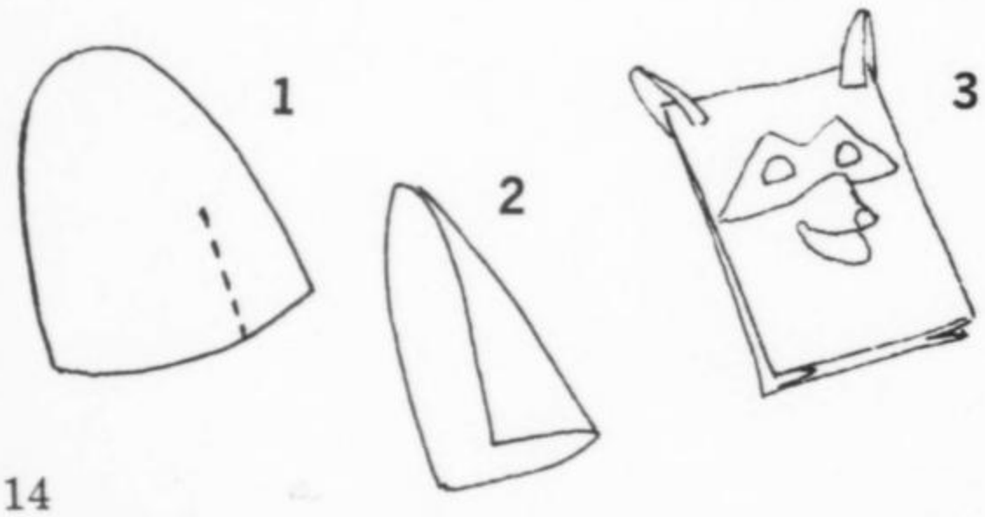
PAPER BAG MASKS

by Tina and Manning Lee

These are the first in a series of paper-bag masks showing Ranger Rick and his friends which will appear in your magazine from time to time. Use them as characters in a play, for animal games you make up or to act out each Ranger Rick and His Friends Adventure story at your club meetings.

They are all made in the same easy way. Start with a paper bag big enough to fit over your head. Draw and color the character on the front of the bag. Have your mother help you cut peepholes so you can see where you are going. Add pieces of cloth, colored paper, beads, buttons, feathers or cotton to make the masks more amusing. Add back views if you like. Make hand masks for puppet shows the same way, using small bags.

RANGER RICK After drawing this mask, you can add thin pieces of fluffed-out cotton for fur on Rick's cheeks. For whiskers, insert short pieces of broom straws through pinholes. Hold them in place from the inside with Scotch tape. Cut ears as shown in Picture 1. Fold as in Picture 2, and glue them on as in Picture 3.



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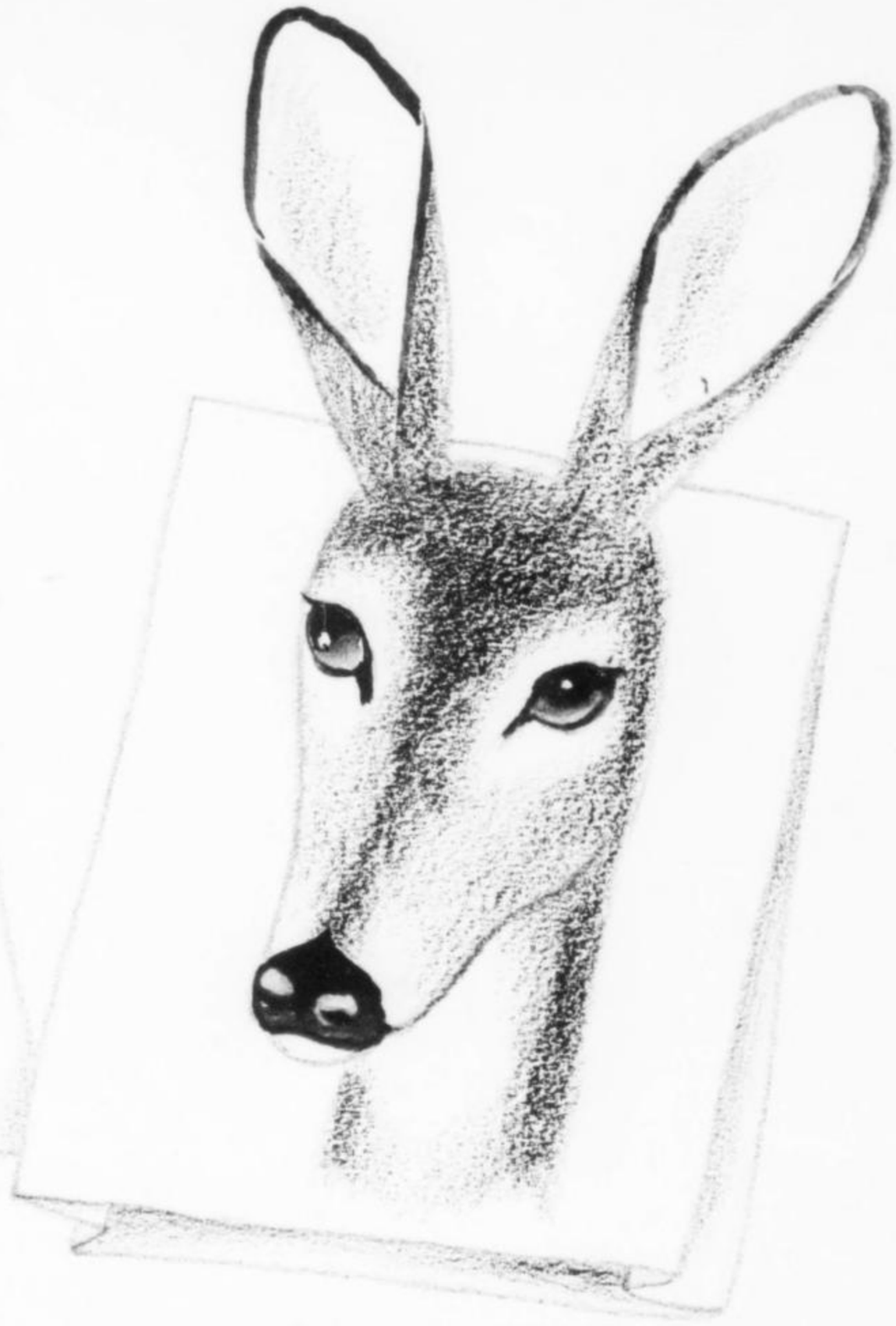
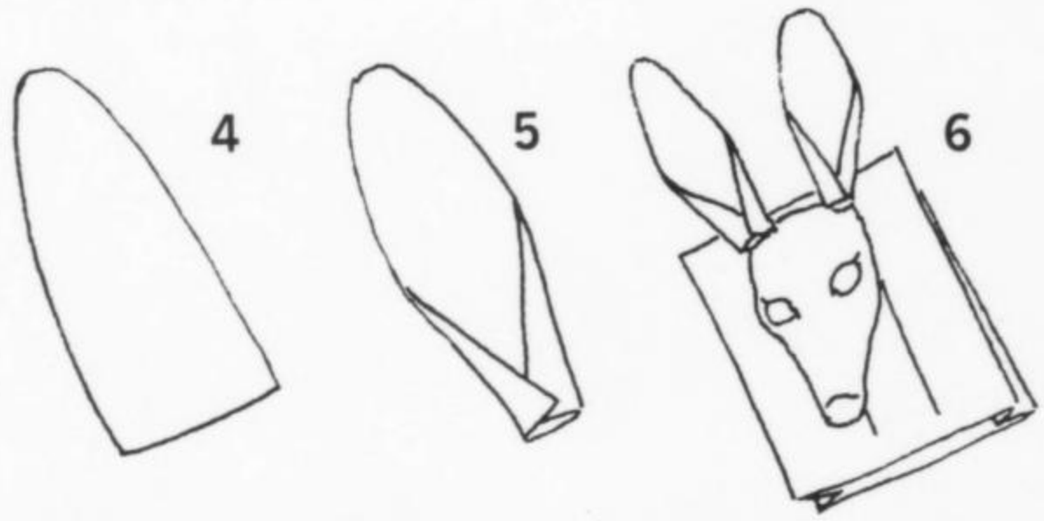


WISE OLD OWL Large round eyes and feathery pointed horns will give Mr. Owl a real owl-like look. Cut the horns as shown in Picture 1. Fold as in Picture 2 and fasten to the bag as in Picture 3.

WALLY WOLF Wally should look as fierce as you can make him, so show his teeth and give him a mean expression when you draw him on the bag. A red paper tongue might be fun to use. Make and attach ears as shown in Pictures 1, 2 and 3.

DAVY DEER This mask will need long ears. The length will depend upon the size of the bag used. To make them, cut two pieces of paper as shown in Picture 4. Fold as shown in Picture 5. Color them and pin or glue them to the top of the deer's head, as shown in Picture 6. Use black beads or buttons to make Davy's eyes sparkle.

The End



by Peggie Geiszel

DOT PUZZLE: Connect the dots to find out what is happening here.

Adventure 5 The Animals of Deep Green Wood Are Poisoned!

Ranger Rick And His Friends

by J. A. Brownridge

"Hey, look at that plane, Rick. It's diving right over Farmer Jones' fields. What do you suppose it's doing?"

Ollie Otter and Ranger Rick were standing on a hillside looking out over the beautiful fields that ran alongside their homes in Deep Green Wood.

The two friends stood open-mouthed with surprise as the plane sped lower and lower. Suddenly a long plume of smoke streamed out from behind the plane and drifted down over the fields like a blanket.

"He's on fire!" shouted Ollie.

But just as suddenly, the smoke stopped. The little plane pulled up and flew off over the woods. Then back again it came to do the same thing time after time until it had covered Farmer Jones' entire farm.

"I can't imagine what he's doing," said Rick in a puzzled tone. "It almost looks as if he's playing a game. I guess he's not doing any harm though, so let's go home and see what's going on there."

Down the trail they trotted toward home, always alert for the danger that lurks in the shadows for those who get careless. Past Shady Pond they went and Ollie couldn't resist a quick dip in the cool, clear water. Down his favorite slide he went while Rick stood by watching his

Please turn the page

friend splashing and playing.

"Come on, Ollie," Rick finally called. "It's time we were getting home."

"Aw, just a few more minutes, Rick," pleaded Ollie. "The water is so nice and no one else is here. Usually I don't have this much room to swim."

"You'd better come now," Rick replied sternly. "It's getting late."

Sadly Ollie pulled himself out of the water, shook himself thoroughly and trotted off behind Rick.

Back home they told the story of the smoking plane to their friends. No one seemed to have an answer to what was happening, so they all put it out of their minds for the time being.

Several days passed. Meanwhile all the animals of Deep Green Wood enjoyed themselves in the warm sunshine.

Then one morning Ranger Rick woke up and heard a gasping, moaning, weak voice outside his door. He rushed out and there he saw Frances Flicker all crumpled up with her wings flopping feebly and looking very ill.

"What in the world is the matter, Frances?" Rick asked.

"Oh, I don't know," gasped the poor little bird. "We're all so sick we don't know what to do. Please help us."

"Who is sick and where are they?" asked Rick.

"Everyone down in Farmer Jones' fields," was the feeble reply.

Very gently Rick picked up the poor, sick bird and carried her over to Nurse Zelda Possum.

"Take good care of her, Zelda," Rick ordered. "I'm going to see what is happening on the farm. Come on, Ollie."

Away they ran through the woods, past the pond, but this time without any thought of a cool swim.

As they got nearer to the farm, they saw Wally Wolf racing in the same direction.

"He's just heard about our sick friends," said Rick, "and he's on his way to catch as many as he can. He always preys on the sick, old or careless animals. We'll have to head him off.

"You run back to Shady Pond as fast as you can and wait at the bottom of your slide. I'll try to get him down to you in the water."

Off scampered Ollie while Rick tried to get Wally's attention.

"Help!" he shouted. "I'm so sick I can hardly move."

Wally skidded to a stop. He recognized that voice as belonging to his worst enemy, Ranger Rick. He grinned evilly and his heart beat fast. At last he was going to win his fight with that goody-goody raccoon.

"Where are you?" he sang out as sweetly as he could.

"Over here by the trail," gasped Rick

Pictures by Lorin Thompson

weakly. "Please help me."

Stealthily Wally crept through the bushes toward the sound of Rick's voice. But each time he got close, Rick slipped farther away, always gasping, always making just enough noise so Wally could follow but never quite letting him catch sight of his prey.

At last they were by the pond and Rick dragged himself to the top of Ollie's slide.

"Here I am over here," he called to the now angry and impatient Wally. "Please help me."

At last Wally could see him. His mouth watered as he could almost taste his plump dinner for tonight. Slowly he crept closer. Then with a great shout, he leaped at Rick.

At the very last second, Rick jumped aside. Desperately Wally tried

to stop, but it was too late. Down the slide he went yelping, scratching and clawing—but it was no use.

Splash! he landed in the water.

"Hooray," shouted Ollie as he landed on Wally's head, pushing him under.

Wally could swim, but he was no match for an otter. Time after time Ollie pushed his head under and twisted him round and round.

"I think he's had enough," called Rick. "Let's go to the farm."

"Haven't had this much fun in years," said Ollie as they watched Wally crawl out on the other side of the pond. Choking, gasping and weak, he headed for home, a very wet and bedraggled wolf.

Back at the farm they found all the birds and animals sick and weak, but no

Please turn the page

one knew why. Rick sent for help from the Deep Green Wood and soon they had carried most of the worst cases up to the emergency hospital that they had set up at Ranger Headquarters.

Rick ran off to find Ranger Tom to ask him what could have happened. Ranger Tom came to the farm very quickly and he had the answer.

The smoking plane that Ollie and Rick had seen was not smoking at all. It was spraying the crops to kill the insects. The trouble was that the man who mixed the chemicals had paid no attention to the directions, had made the mixture much too strong and had used a kind that was not approved as safe for wildlife. The food that the birds and animals had eaten was covered with the chemical spray and it had poisoned them.

Ranger Tom showed Farmer Jones what had happened, and he was very sorry. He said he would make sure the man read the directions the next time and used a spray that would not hurt wildlife.

Back in Deep Green Wood the sick birds and animals were beginning to recover. Frances Flicker showed her gratitude by teaching the young folks about the country she saw in her travels. She was a good teacher and they were all sad when she left. *The End*

Dear Rangers, I hope all children will remember that they should never try to use insect sprays. They are wonderful when grown-ups use them properly, carefully following the directions. But children might accidentally hurt themselves or others or pets if they try to use insect sprays.

RANGER RICK

Guests From Another Land

Can you guess which of these mandarin ducks is the male? Like most birds he is larger and more brightly colored, which attracts the female. Most ducks nest on the ground or in swamps. But mandarins, like American wood ducks, nest in tree hollows a few feet above the banks of lakes or rivers. They often perch in trees as high as the roof of a house. A zoo is the nearest place you'll be able to see a mandarin, because his real home is in China, Japan or Siberia.

Photo by Russ Kinne, Photo Researchers, Inc.

Yellowstone National Park

Our First Wilderness Refuge

Phot
U. S.

by Peter Thomson

Out where the shining Rocky Mountains rise high in our western sky there is a forest wonderland. It is a land of swift, broad, crystal-clear streams. One of these, the mighty Yellowstone River, flows into deep pools and then dashes over sparkling shallows until it comes to a steep, narrow place in the riverbed. There, with roaring power, it becomes two waterfalls leaping down into the depths of a canyon.

Other cold, clear streams flow here too. There is a beautiful lake with a shoreline that is more than a hundred miles long. Trout swim in these waters and thousands of wild animals live in the meadows and forests through which these streams flow. You may see fleet-footed antelope and graceful deer. Mighty grizzly bears, hard-working beavers and herds of bison, which we call buffalo, are just a few of the many animals which live here.

Among the birds of the Yellowstone region are the pelicans, which are clumsy on land but very graceful in the air. Our rare trumpeter swans were nearly extinct not long ago, but now these beautiful birds dwell safely here because hunting is not allowed in our national parks.

The beautiful scenery and the marvelous wildlife of the Yellowstone are enough to make it a wonderful wilderness. But this region has even more than that. It is an awe-inspiring place. Brave though they were, the Indians feared this land because they had no wish to camp where the earth rumbled and where steaming-hot water gushed out of the ground with fearful force. They called it the "Land of Burning Mountains."

Underground heat has created the more than ten thousand wonders that have made Yellowstone National Park world-famous. A hole in the ground suddenly roars and spurts steam and hot water with dragonlike fury. Mud of many colors gushes out of the ground like hot paint. There are deep pools of sapphire-blue or emerald-green water which are jewel-like in their clear beauty. Only when these pools steam and bubble do visitors realize that the water in them is very hot.

Famous explorers like John Colter and Jim Bridger were as well known in pioneer days for their tall tales as they were for their exciting explorations. Few people believed their stories about pools of boiling water, "gushers" that hurled steaming

Please turn the page

The rocky walls of the canyon are many shades of yellow, which gives this beautiful region its name.

Photo by
U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Photo by M. Woodbridge Williams,
National Park Service

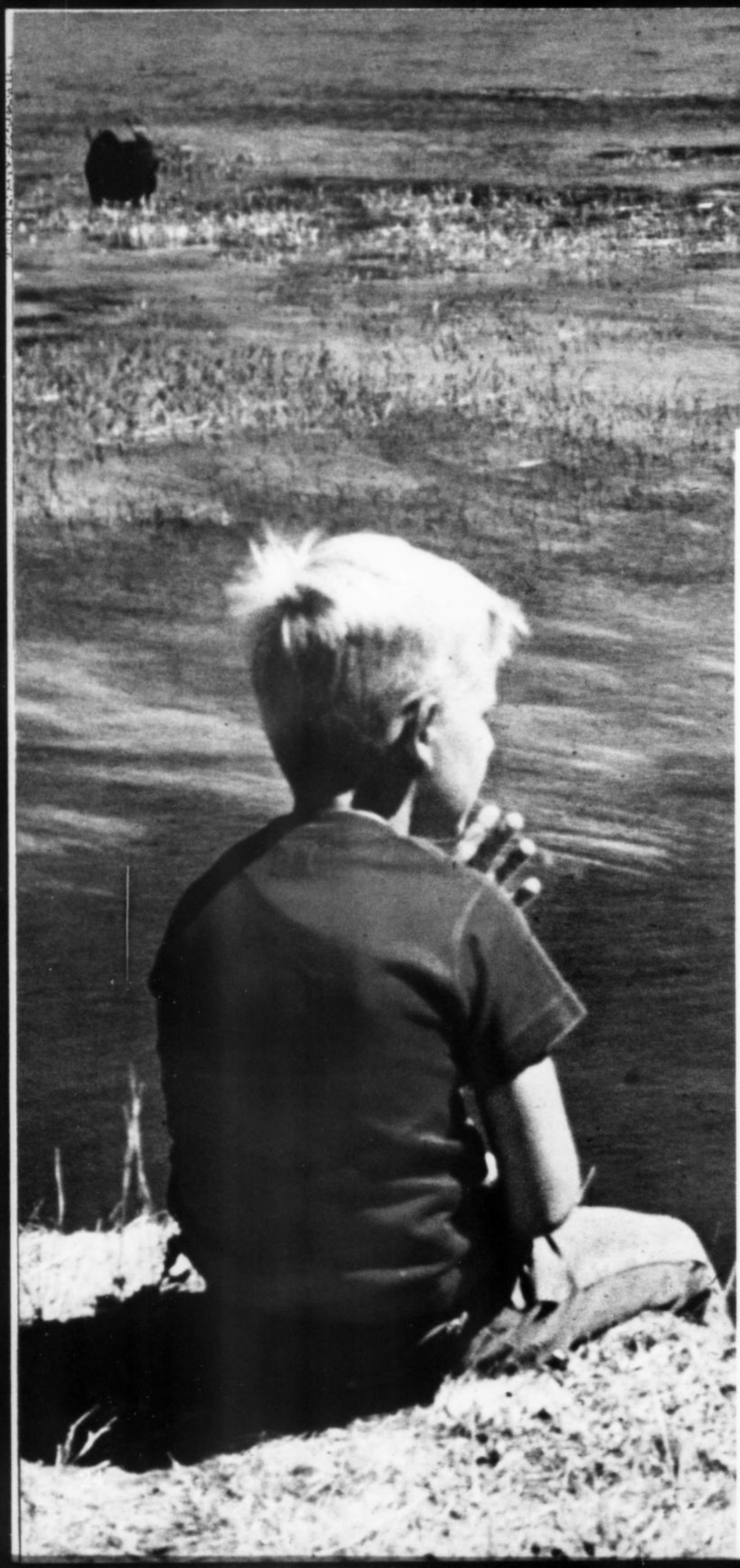


Photo by Clark R. Gardner, Photo Researchers, Inc.

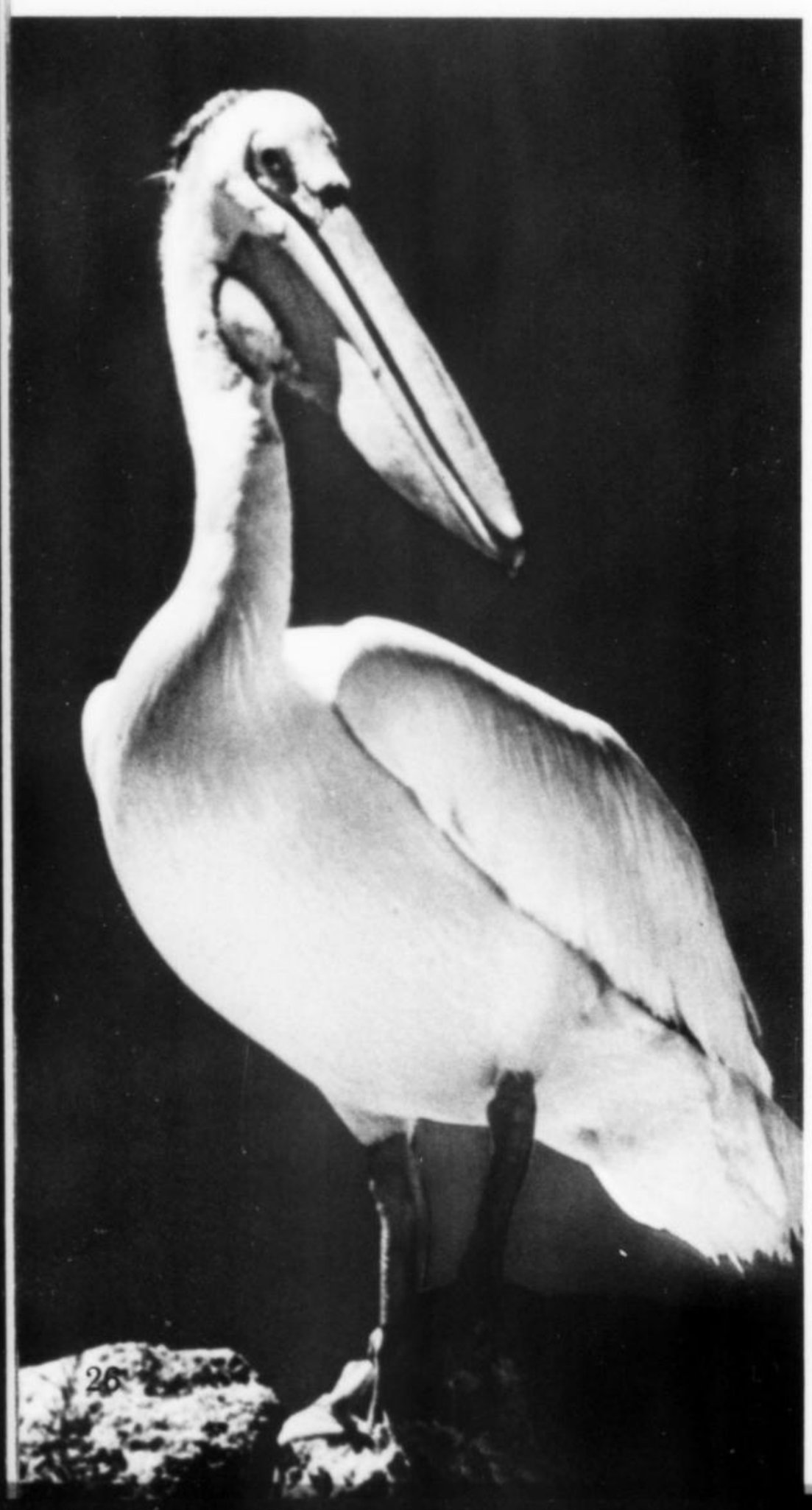
Photo by U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service

You may see a few of the many animals which live in the Yellowstone region if you watch patiently—perhaps a moose in the middle of the river or an osprey with a trout. You might see trumpeter swans out for a swim or a herd of elk roaming the plain.

Photo by M. Woodbridge Williams, National Park Service

Photo by Grant Heilman

A visitor might see a golden-mantled ground squirrel or a pelican living in the park.



water high into the sky, and a mountain made of glass. This mountain was Obsidian Cliff, which the Indians visited in spite of their fear of the "Land of Burning Mountains," because they needed the natural black volcanic glass to make arrowheads, spear points and sharp-edged tools for cutting and scraping.

Could there be some truth in these wild stories told by the pioneers? In 1870 a group of men was sent out to explore the Yellowstone.

Gathered around a campfire on September 19, 1870, after a day of exciting exploration, men of the Washburn-Langford-Doane Expedition to Yellowstone talked about what they had seen. Judge Cornelius Hedges said that this splendid land should be set aside by our Government and preserved for the benefit of all people. That is how a great idea was born.

Being a man of action, Judge Hedges wrote an article for the *Helena Herald* in which he said that a national park should be created to preserve the wonders of Yellowstone. Other members of the expedition wrote and talked about the marvels of the Yellowstone. Finally people agreed that this region should be protected. On March 1, 1872, President Ulysses S. Grant signed a bill which created Yellowstone National Park our first national park. Today there are thirty-three.

We are lucky to have wise men speak up to protect the things which have made America great. Every man, woman and child in this land can share the beauty of our magnificent national parks. Each of us should do his part to make sure that our natural wonders will always be here for the benefit and enjoyment of all people.

The End

Photo by
U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service

WILDLIFE BABIES· DO THEY MAKE GOOD PETS?

Please turn the page

Photo by Jack Dermid

WILDLIFE BABIES· DO THEY MAKE GOOD PETS?

by Keith G. Hay
U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service

When you play outdoors this spring and summer, keep your eyes open—you might find a wildlife baby! It might be a tiny rabbit nestled in with its brothers and sisters, eyes still tightly shut . . . or a baby squirrel, a chipmunk, even a fawn.

Look at the baby animals on these two pages. They are very cute and cuddly. Wouldn't you like to have one for a pet? Probably. But would that baby like it? Would it be best for him? *No.* I'll tell you why *wildlife babies do not make good pets.*

To begin with, finding a little animal alone in the woods does not mean the mother has deserted it. Although you may not see her, the mother has left for only a short time to find food and water or because you frightened her. She will return soon. In fact, she may be watching you from a hiding place, hoping you won't disturb her family. But suppose you do . . .

Taking a baby from its mother is always cruel. How would your mother feel if she came home from shopping and found that you had been carried away? She would want you back right away. But returning a wildlife baby to its mother is not so easy. You would have trouble finding her. Also some wild animals will not take their young back if they smell of humans.

Once you take that baby away from its mother, *you* have to take her place. You must keep the little one as warm as it would have been in its nest, snuggled against mother's warm body. You must keep it from harm, not only from dogs and cats, but even from too much touching by loving hands.

And you must feed it! All the wild babies you see here are mammals—animals who feed their young with milk. But it's a very special milk, not the kind your dairy has. Cow's milk, the kind you drink, can make your new-found baby sick, even cause it to die.

But suppose that it did begin to grow. Wildlife babies grow fast, for they must be able to take care of themselves by the time winter arrives. By fall spring's tiny fawn is a pretty big deer, requiring a lot of food and room to roam. The little red fox and the coyote pup are hearty eaters within a few months. A young bear can eat twice as much as Lassie.

But what *do* they eat? Their food is not the same as yours. Nature has taught the wild mother to provide the proper foods, but only specially trained people—like

Deer fawn

Bear cub

in zoos—know what to feed a wild baby.

Suppose your wildlife pet thrives, begins to eat as much as you do in a day and outgrows its cage; then what do you do? Some animals are lucky and are taken to a local zoo where they are cared for. Many people, however, take them back to where they were found or to any handy woodlot and release them to fend for themselves.

The wildlife youngster raised in captivity and returned to the wild may die of hunger or cold.

So much for the dangers to the baby. Now let me mention some serious dangers to *you*. Even finding the baby may put you in danger, because some mothers will protect their young with their lives. Female bears, deer, elk and moose, for example, will often attack humans who are only trying to pet their young.

Wild animals rarely become as tame as a cat or dog. When frightened or disturbed they will often revert to their wild nature —biting, clawing or goring anyone near. When they are adults and mating season comes, they become mean and quarrelsome.

Another danger is that most animals carry parasites such as lice or ticks—tiny insects that live in or on another animal. Foxes, raccoons, skunks, deer, squirrels, rabbits, chipmunks and birds can have parasites. If you handle them, you can get parasites too. This can lead to serious diseases for people as well an animals.

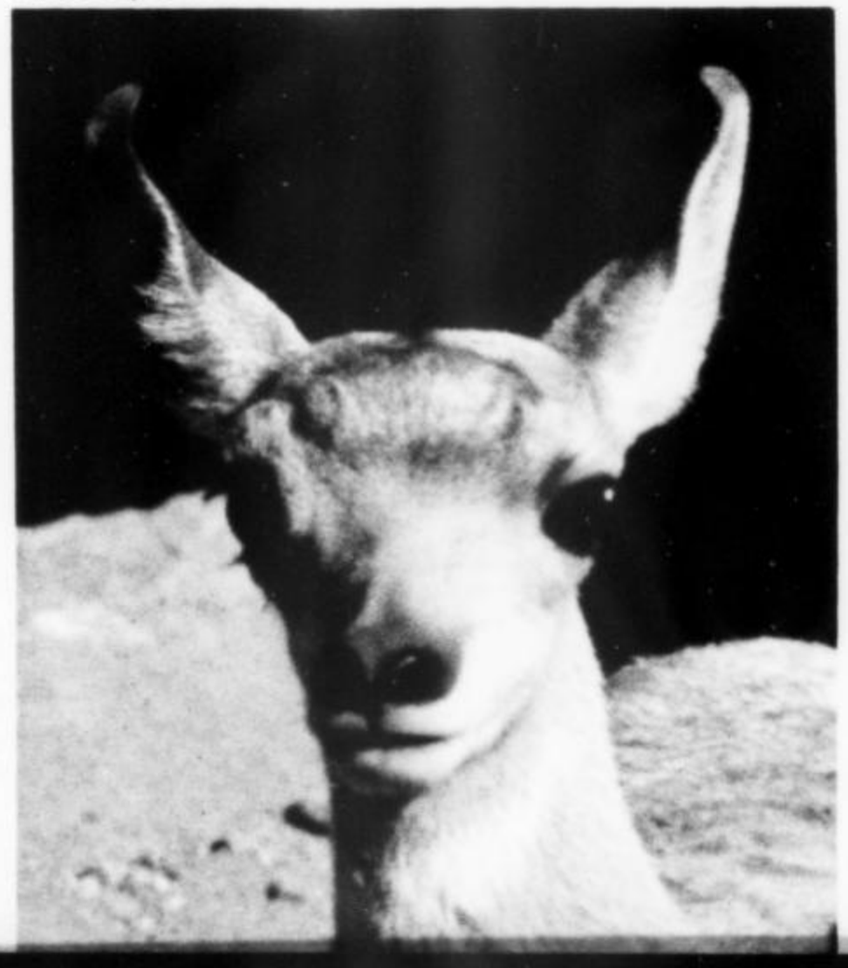
There are special laws, wildlife conservation laws, made to protect many wild animals, including some of the ones on this page. These laws would make it illegal to capture and keep such animals.

So there are many reasons why wildlife babies do not make good pets and are better left in their natural habitat. Young animals, like young humans, belong in their own homes. Their mothers will see to it that they grow strong and healthy.

Remember, if you find a wild baby animal, just look—you are not a substitute for a wildlife mother. *The End*

Editor's Note: If you should ever find a wildlife baby, and you know for certain that the mother has been killed by a car, another animal, or in an accident and you want to try to save the baby's life, here's what you should do: Telephone your local game protector and ask his permission to keep it. If he says you can, ask him how to care for it. If he says you shouldn't keep it, ask him where you can take it to be cared for.

Antelope fawn



Fox kit

Photos by Keith G. Hay and Don Domenick

Beaver kit

THE UNDERWATER TIGER

by Vinson Brown

Down in the dark waters of a pond lurks a fierce creature that is so ugly not even its mother could call it beautiful. Yet scientists call it a *nymph*, a name given long ago to a very beautiful fairy!

This water nymph starts life as an egg that is usually attached to the stem of a water plant near the pond's surface. When the creature breaks out of the egg in the springtime it is rather small and soft. It has no idea it will grow into a dangerous, ugly water nymph, nor does it know it will one day be beautiful. But it does know one thing no mother needs to tell it.

Suddenly the stems of the water plants quiver and the nymph sees something flash like silver. Quickly it lets its body drop softly down into the mud. It does not know that the silvery flash was made by a fish, but it does know that such a strange movement may mean a big mouth is near to gobble it up.

So the water nymph hides in the muck and soon grows a hard body covering. It is as if your skin were to grow into hard shell-like plates and if a boy hit you it would make him cry "ouch!" This hard shell is actually the water nymph's outer skeleton. It is very different from the inner skeleton you have. If you looked closely at this creature, you would also see that it now has six powerful legs, the legs of an insect.

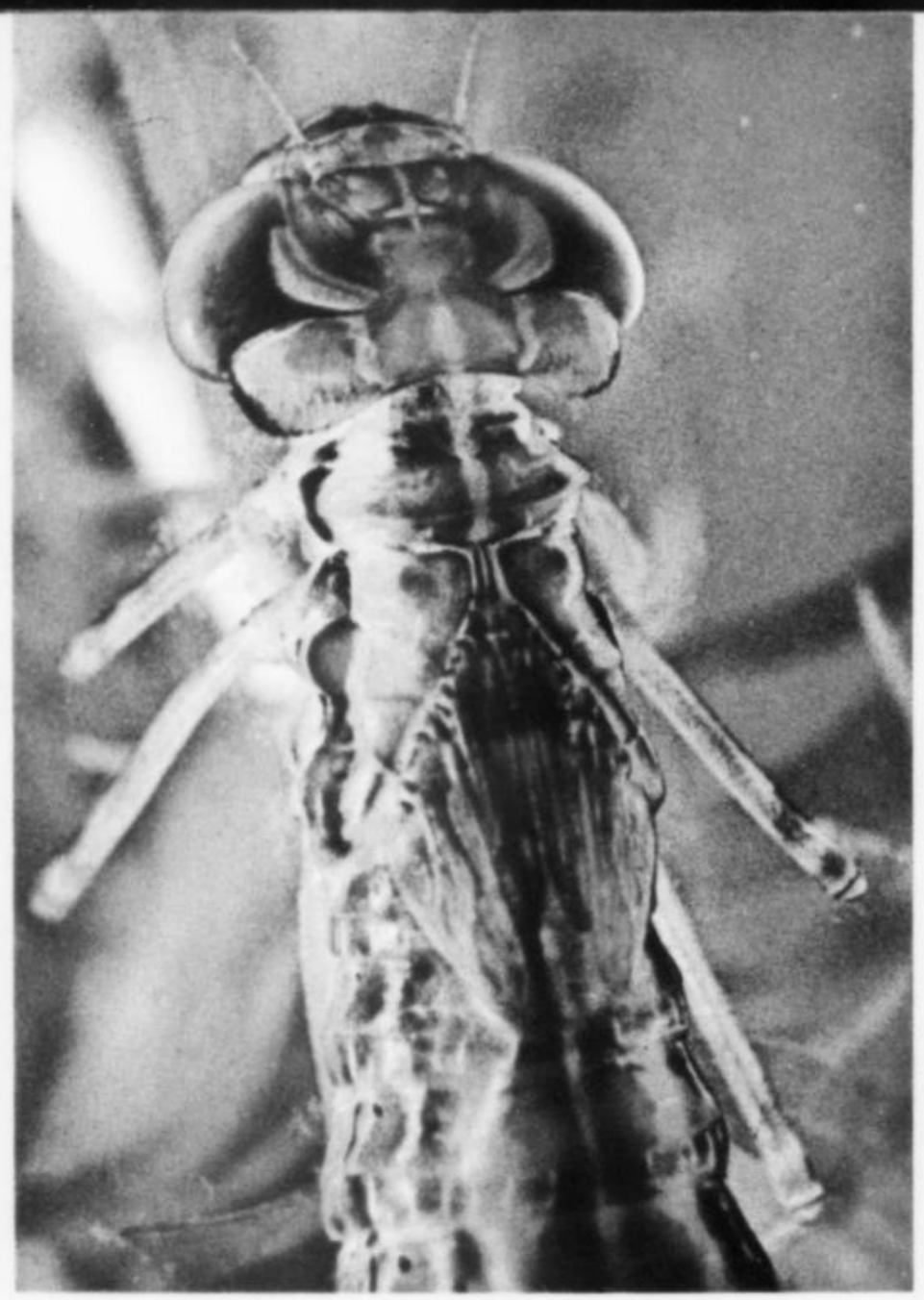
What an ugly, dangerous-looking creature it soon becomes! But, strangely, it does not grow big slowly, as you do. Instead, it grows larger in jumps. For a while it wanders slowly around feeding on smaller creatures but staying exactly the same size. Then one day it goes into hiding. Here the inner body, which has grown too big, suddenly splits. The old

Please turn the page

Picture by Arthur Wallower

Water nymphs grow in spurts and shed their outgrown shells every few weeks. Nearly full grown they are about as long as your daddy's little finger.

urts
hells
own
long
nger.



Nymphs have very large eyes which help them to see small fish swim by.

outer skeleton opens down the middle of the back. Out of this climbs the soft body inside. It is so soft at first that it must stay hidden until it can grow new armor. It grows bigger and bigger by these strange leaps every two weeks or so, repeating this about nine times during its life.

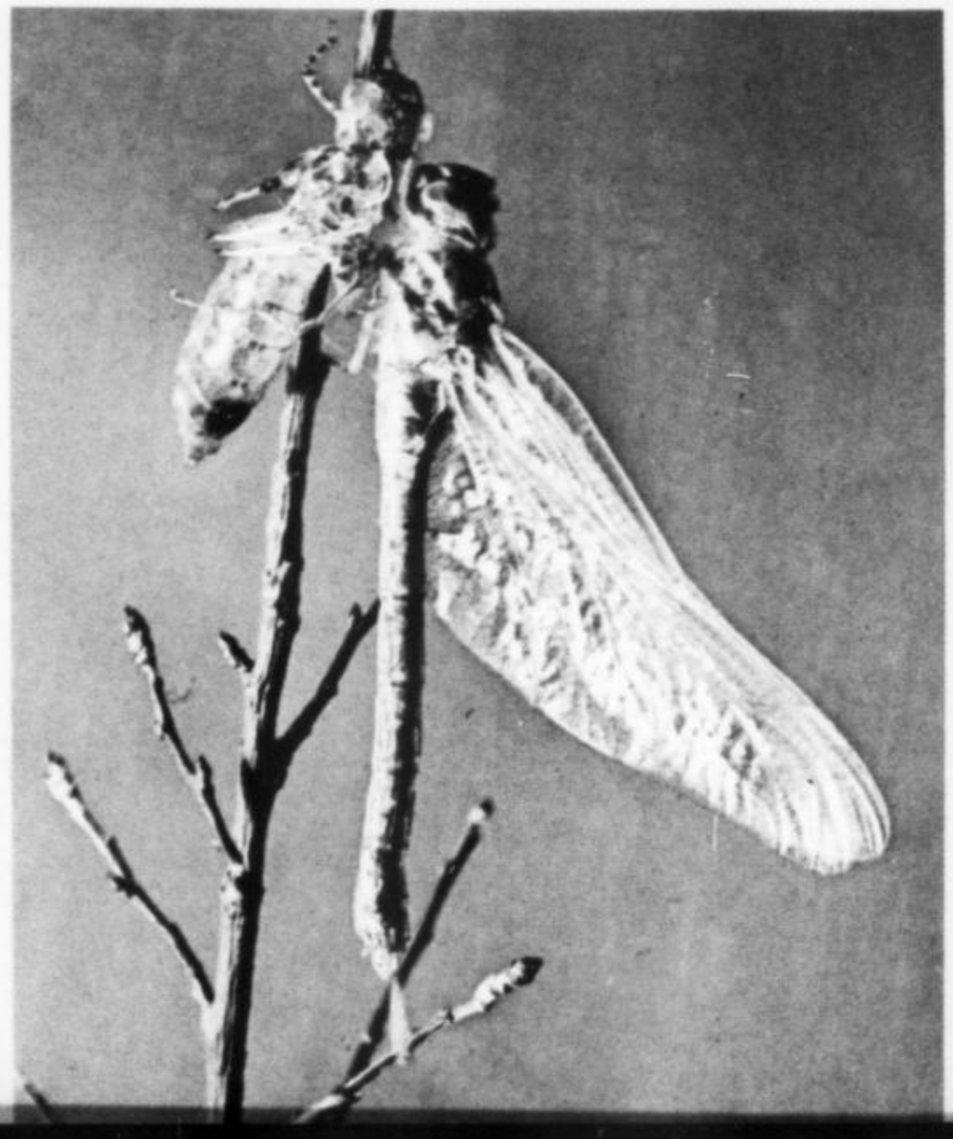
Now at last it is a true water nymph, so fierce looking that it has few enemies. Since it is a kind of mud-brown color, it is not easy to see on the muddy bottom. Its color hides it not only from enemies but also from those insects and tiny fish it wants to catch and eat.

What a great ugly face or mask our water nymph has—uglier than the face of a baboon or hippopotamus. Watch it when a small fish comes swimming near. Suddenly that fierce mask explodes! Out snaps the long, hinged lower lip, armed with sharp hooks. They close on the helpless fish. The lip drags in the thrashing body.

When the water nymph gets as big and ugly as it is ever going to, it moves about restlessly on the bottom and looks up eagerly toward the light. Does it know that something really wonderful is about to happen? At last it begins sluggishly to climb a water-plant stem. Up and up it goes until it breaks through the water into the air and sunlight. When its body is dry, for the last time its armorlike skeleton breaks open. But this time no ugly water nymph comes out. The strange bumps on its back have hidden a wonderful magic!

Out comes a king of the air indeed, with great transparent wings slowly unfolding from the original bumps. The soft body begins to harden and then glistens in the sunshine like bright metal. The ugly water nymph has at long last become a lovely dragonfly. *The End*

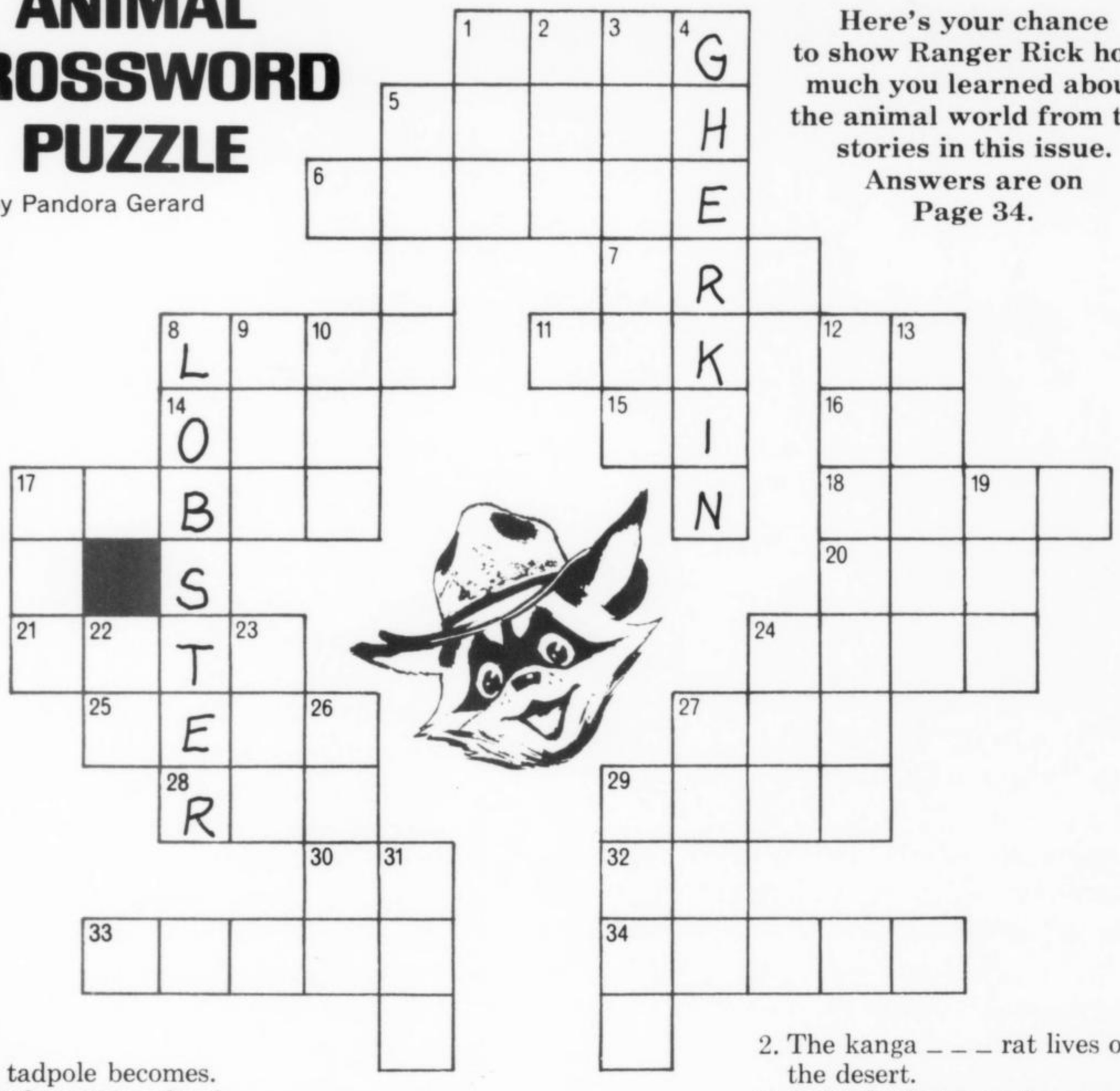
Above water the ugly nymph comes out of its last shell and becomes a winged beauty.



Photos by Robert Dunne

ANIMAL CROSSWORD PUZZLE

by Pandora Gerard



Here's your chance to show Ranger Rick how much you learned about the animal world from the stories in this issue. Answers are on Page 34.

ACROSS

1. What a tadpole becomes.
5. What clothes are made of.
6. An enemy of Dipo and Domy.
7. To make a mistake.
8. The name of a bird that rhymes with moon.
11. Noah took animals into a boat called an _ _ _.
12. The initials of Tom Sawyer.
14. If a thing is mine, I _ _ _ it.
15. To a Mexican, it means *yes*.
16. This word means *in, on, near*.
17. A log is a chipmunk's dining T _ _ _ _.
18. Fawns are baby _ _ _ _.
20. Tennyson Two was a _ _ _ to Tammie all summer.
21. Insect like a butterfly.
24. Looks like a dog and is Ranger Rick's worst enemy.
25. This animal is called "black," but may be many colors.
27. The arma _ _ _ lo has an armor of bony plates.
28. A kind of grain.
29. Baby birds like to D _ _ _.
30. A zebra is not _ _ tall as a giraffe.
32. Opposite of *down*.
33. An insect named for a beautiful fairy is a water N _ _ _ _.
34. Their C _ _ _ _ often helps animals hide from their enemies.

DOWN

1. A nymph becomes a dragon- _ _ _.
2. The kanga _ _ _ rat lives on the desert.
3. Animals that love the water.
5. A nickname for raccoons.
9. This bird eats small animals.
10. Fewer than two is _ _ _.
12. A T _ _ _ _ _ _ _ becomes a frog after it losses its tail.
13. To rob.
17. Ranger who helps Ranger Rick.
19. A mischievous fairy.
22. Initials of Omar Bradley.
23. What cows and horses eat.
24. Opposite of *lose*.
26. In the fall a farmer will R _ _ _ his crops.
27. Domy's mate.
29. A mandarin is a kind of D _ _ _.
31. Bluejays are bold, not _ _ _.

Ollie Otter's FUN and GAMES

Riddles From Rangers

How do you stop an elephant from charging? (Take away his credit card.)

—*Scott Baumann, N. J.*

What is the richest snake in the world? (Diamondback rattlesnake.)

What's another name for a parrot with an umbrella? (Poly-unsaturated.)

—*Tony Davids, Age 6, Calif.*

If you were surrounded by 20 lions, 15 tigers and 10 leopards, how would you get away? (Stop the merry-go-round and get off.) —*Claudia Ericson, Age 8, Wis.*

How do you catch a squirrel?
(You climb up a tree and act like a nut.)

—*Lee Crooks, Wis.*

NOTE: Send your favorite riddles and jokes to me in care of Ranger Rick, P.O. Box 2299, Philadelphia, Pa. 19103. Be sure to give your name, age and address.

Fun With Paper Snakes

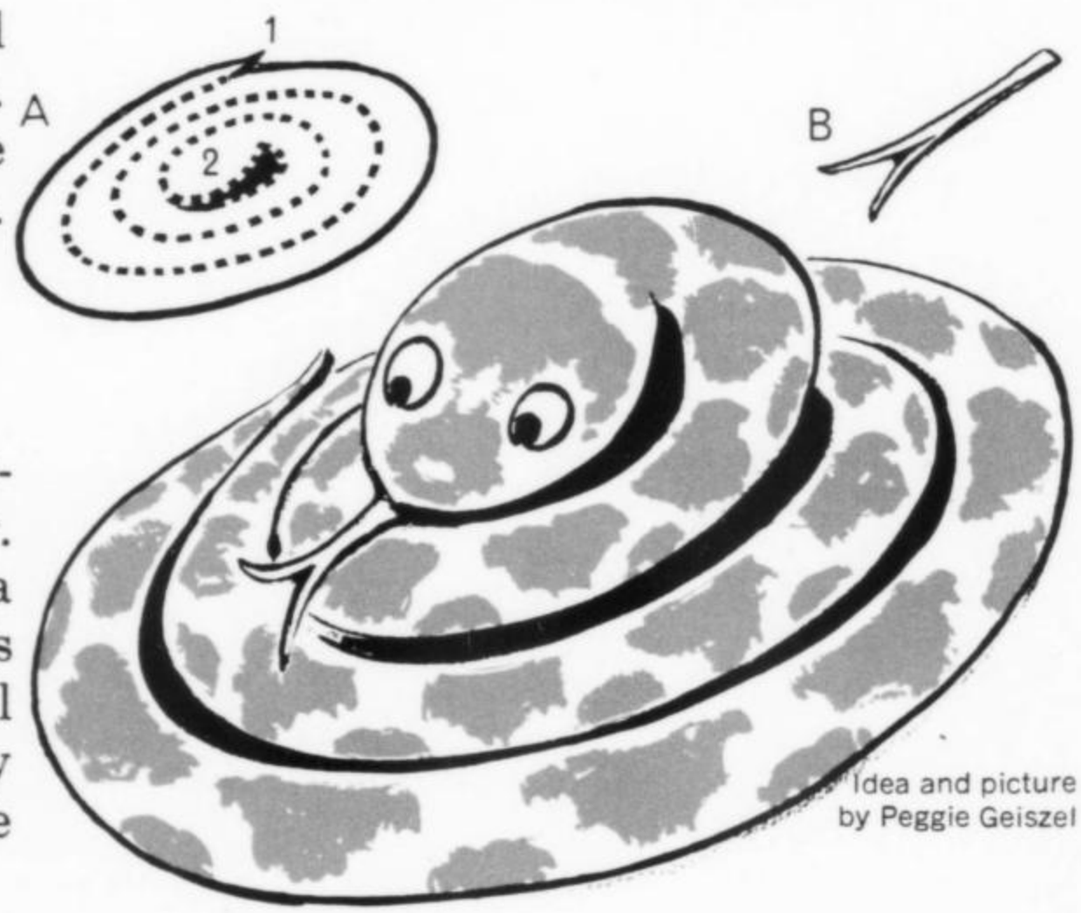
A 7-inch paper plate makes a medium-sized snake just right for a party favor. Cut off the outside border. Then, with a light pencil line, start at Point 1, which is the tip of the snake's tail. Draw a spiral shape leading to the center, as shown by dotted line in Picture A. The oval shape at Point 2 is the head.

Cut along the pencil line. Then cut away an extra piece under the snake's head, as shown by shaded part at Point 2.

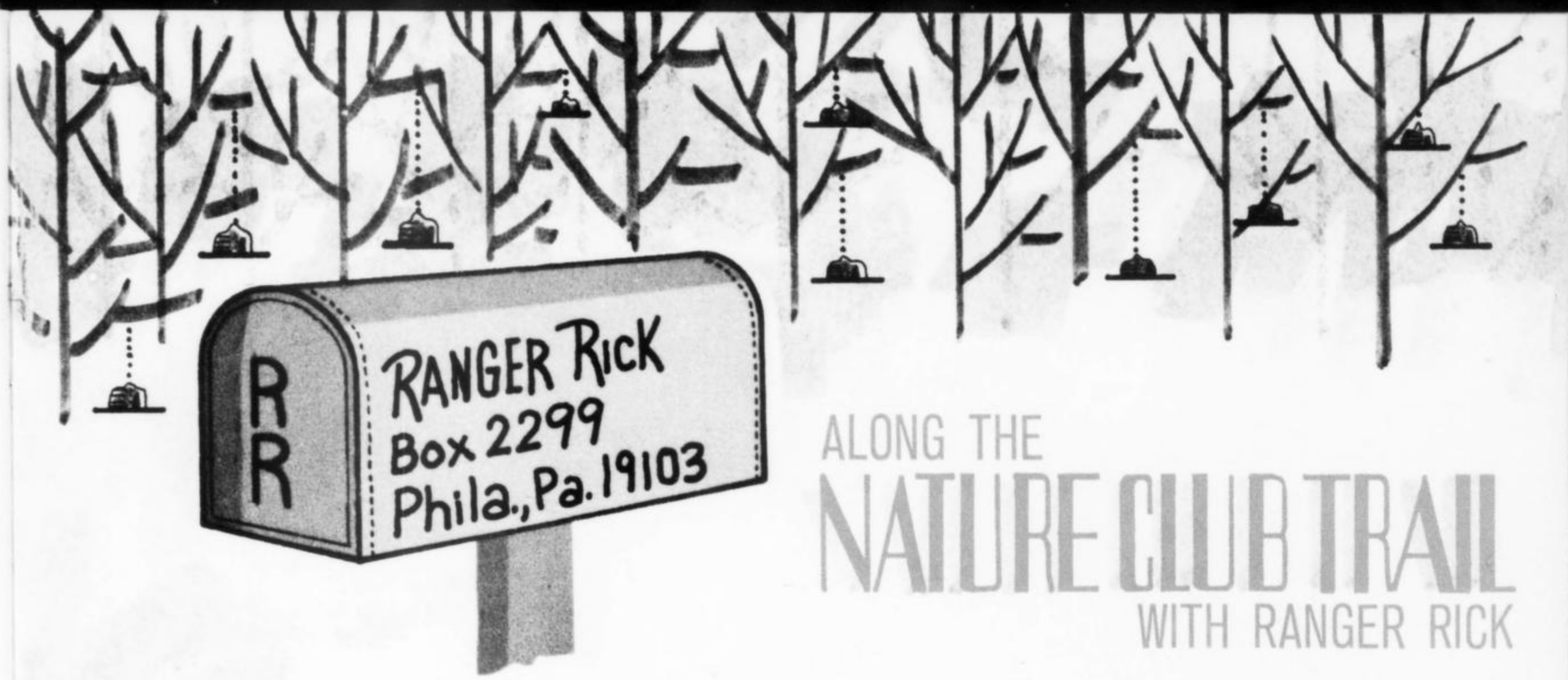
Draw eyes and add spots, stripes or other markings in whatever colors you wish. In an encyclopedia or snake book you can find colored pictures of real snakes and copy their markings.

From the discarded plate border, cut a shape like Picture B for the snake's tongue. Color it black and tape it under the head.

At a Nature Club meeting or party you can give out paper plates and crayons and see who can make the funniest, the prettiest, or the most lifelike snakes.



Idea and picture by Peggie Geiszel



ALONG THE

NATURE CLUB TRAIL

WITH RANGER RICK

Ranger Tom and I were talking about Be Kind to Animals Week, which starts on May 7 and is sponsored by the Animal Humane Association. I asked him whether there was a Be Kind to People Week.

"No need," chuckled Ranger Tom. "Be Kind to Animals Week *does* include people. Here is something I read that says it better than I can. It was written by Mrs. John L. Wilson of the Animal Charity League, Inc. 'Kindness to animals cannot be separated from kindness to people. A child who grows up being gentle to all who cannot fight back will make a better world for both people and animals to live in.' "

"I guess we all *are* in the same boat," I said. "Goodness knows I have plenty of letters from Nature Club members to prove it." Then I showed Ranger Tom a letter from Becky McDowall, Virginia, who wrote:

"One day Mom and Dad were working in our garden. Mom was pulling up dead plants when she uncovered a nest of baby rabbits. I figured out why they were deserted. Our dog had been sick the night before. She had caught and eaten the mother rabbit.

"I think the mother went out to look for food. Before she left she dug a hole, put the babies in it, covered them with fur and then dirt.

"The rabbits were handed over to me. I put them in a tall box with clean rags in it and a stuffed animal. They thought the animal was their mother so they got under it and went to sleep.

"I brought them inside because we have a lot of dogs around us. I fixed some warm milk and put it in a baby bottle I bought. They wouldn't take it for a while, but soon they got the hang of it. After a week or so we went to the store to get some baby food, like strained carrots and peas. Sure enough, they walked all through it and then ate it.

"Soon they got old enough to be let go. But since the dog knew their scent, we took them up to Buffalo Creek to let go. Boo-hoo! I have had other adventures with baby rabbits that were *all* exciting. I love animals and hope to become a vet."

I hope you do, Becky, and I know you will live up to The Veterinarian's Oath, which begins: "I solemnly dedicate myself and the knowledge I possess to the benefit of society, to the conservation of our

Please turn the page

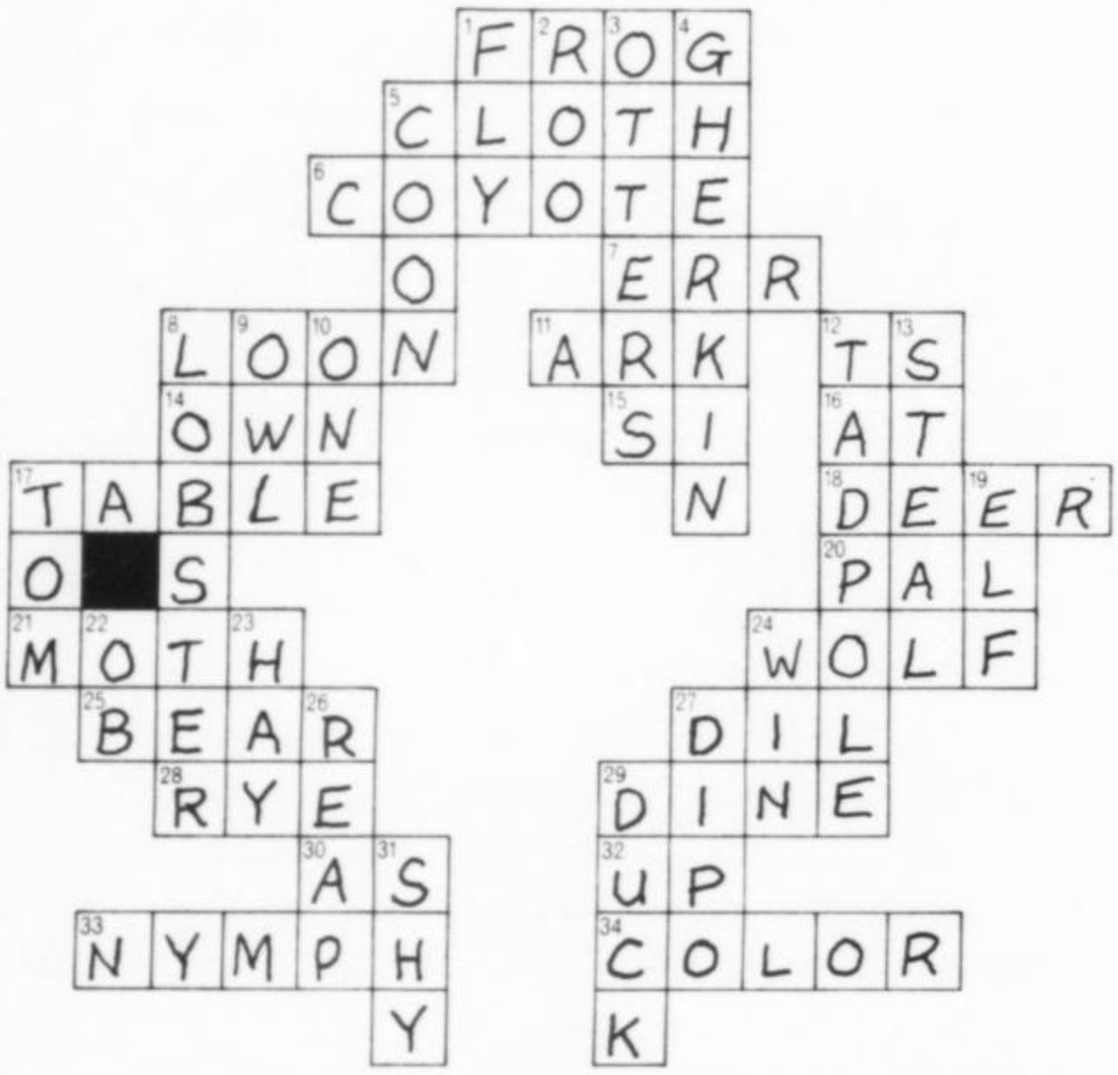
livestock resources and to the relief of suffering of animals."

All Rangers: Be sure to read on Page 27 about what to do if you find any wildlife babies.

I'm wondering what some of you other Rangers want to be when you grow up. How about telling me in a letter?

RANGER RICK

Answers to Crossword Puzzle



RAIN

Where does the rain come from?
It falls from the sky
And the clouds drift by.
What does the rain fall on?
It falls on the ground
Making a pitter-pat sound.
Where does the rain go?
Gutters it seeks
That flow into creeks.
Where do the creeks flow?
They flow into seas
And wait for a breeze.
Why wait for a breeze?
It dries up the rain
And makes clouds again.

(*Mommy and I wrote this poem. She asked the questions, I told her the answers and she made it rhyme.*)

—*Meredith Eddy, Age 7, Ohio*

Maybe you and your mother would like to do a poem together. And I'd certainly like to see it if you do. Choose something in nature that especially interests you. Please put your name, age and address on the poem and send it to my post-office box.

This bull buffalo might be remembering a great adventure. What do you think? Write a story or make a drawing of what he is thinking about. Send it to Ranger Rick, with your name and address. Don't forget to add your age too!

Photo by Leonard Lee Rue, III

Casting Bird and Animal Tracks

Tracks in mud, clay or damp sand are the easiest to cast. The best places to look are on trails along stream banks and in the woods after a rain. You can even find them in your back yard sometimes.

Take along a package of plaster of Paris, a mixing can and stick, strips of cardboard about 2 inches by 17 inches, a few paper clips, some waxed paper and a plastic jug (with water in it if you cannot count on being near a pond or stream).

When you find a clear, deep track, remove twigs, small stones or leaves that may be in or around it. Make a cardboard wall around the track. Fasten it with paper clips and carefully push the bottom edge at least ½ inch into the ground. (See Picture 1.)

1

Pour water into the mixing can—about as much as it would take to fill the walled-in spot to a depth of an inch. With your fingers, sprinkle some plaster into the can and stir it. Keep doing this until the mixture is like thick cream. Then sprinkle a thin layer of dry plaster over the top. When small cracks appear, stir well and pour the mixture slowly over the track to about ¾ inch depth above ground level.

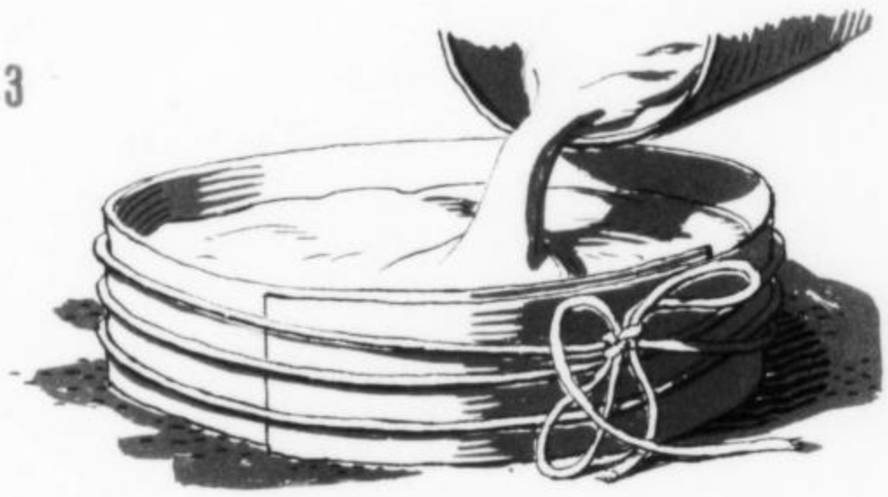
Allow about thirty minutes for the plaster to set, then lift the mold with cast inside and wrap it loosely in waxed paper. After you bring it home, let the mold dry thoroughly, preferably overnight. Then remove the cardboard and wash the cast.

What you have is a raised form of the track, as though you had turned it inside out. (Picture 2.) You may shellac and paint it. Or you may want to make what is known as a positive cast which will look exactly like the track in the ground.

2

To do this, coat the cast well with Vaseline. Make a cardboard wall around it and fasten firmly with paper clips and string. (Picture 3.) If you are going to hang the cast on a wall, make a mark on the side of the mold to show where the top center is.

3



Mix a fresh batch of plaster and pour it to a depth of ¾ of an inch. To make a loop hanger, knot both ends of a 3-inch piece of string. With a toothpick, poke the knots down into the plaster just under the mark you made. Let the plaster dry overnight, then remove cardboard and pull the casts apart, prying with a table knife, if necessary. Shellac or paint as you like.

To be a proper collector's item, your cast should be labeled with the date and the name of animal or bird. *The End*

BOUQUETS FOR MOTHER

by Peggie Geiszel

On Mother's special day, Sunday, May 14, you can surprise her with a present of flowers at her place at the breakfast table. Shown here are two ways to do this.

If you live in the country, look for spring wild flowers (violets are especially good to use).

Pick the flowers and a few leaves late Saturday afternoon and immediately wrap the stems gently in damp cotton.

Then cover the cotton with a strip of silver foil and keep in a cool place.

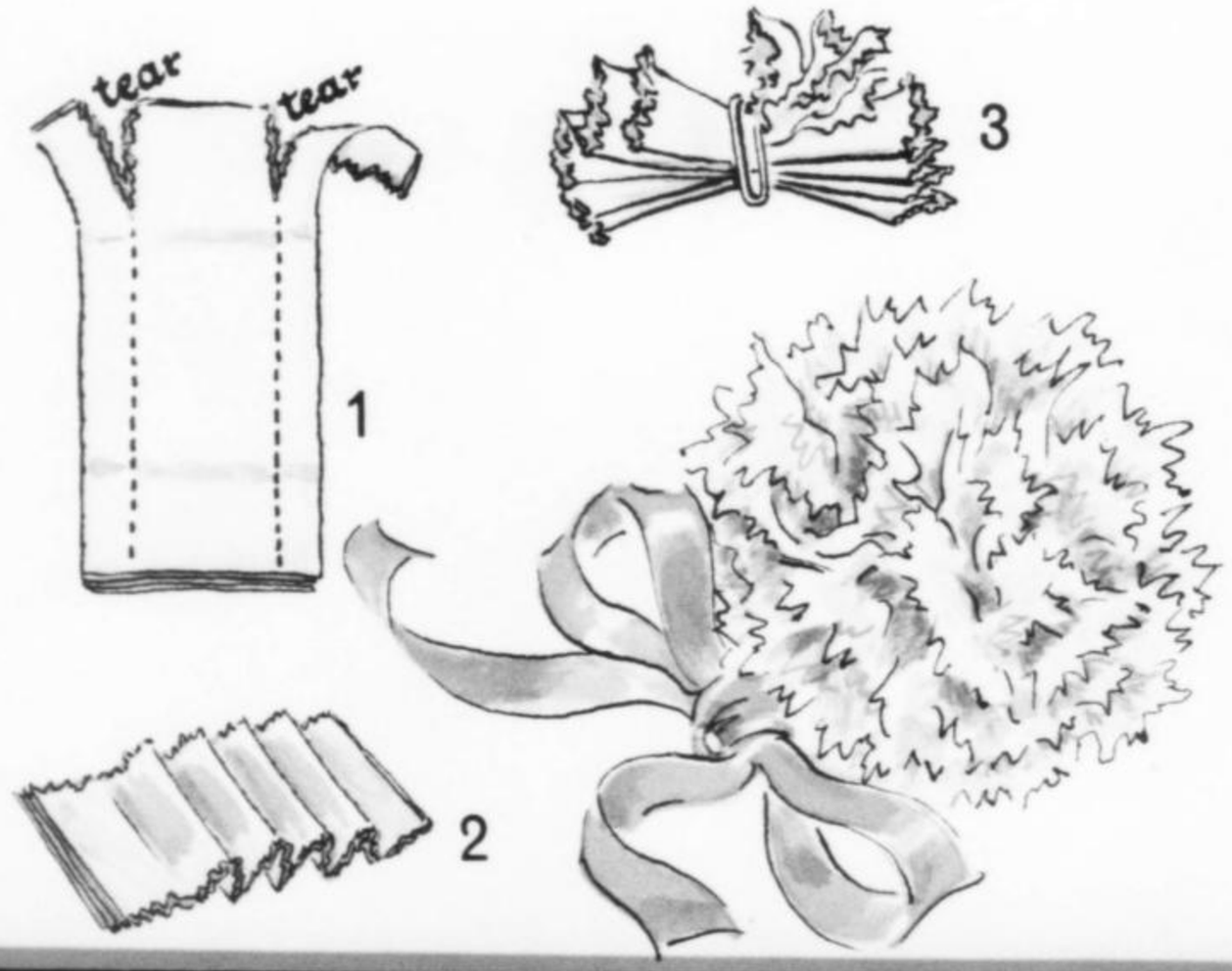
On Sunday morning add a ribbon bow, a card, and a flower pin in case your mother will wear the bouquet.

If you live in the city, make Mother a paper flower corsage from two pink tissues and a paper clip—or make several flowers.

Unfold the tissues, place one over the other and fold in half. Now tear off the edges on the long sides (1). Fold this remaining strip back and forth, accordion style, as shown (2).

Place a paper clip in the middle of the pleats and gently pull each edge apart and up toward the clip (3).

The torn edges will look like real carnation petals but will last longer. Tie a bow to the other end of the clip. *The End*



Who-O-O Knows

by Wise Old Owl

Do You Believe . . .

	Yes	No
1. A giraffe has more neck-bones than a sparrow?	____	____
2. A snake stings with its tongue?	____	____
3. A fish's scales help to tell its age?	____	____

ANSWERS: 1. No. There are more bones in the neck of any bird than in the neck of a giraffe. A giraffe has seven, a sparrow, fourteen.

2. No. A snake's forked tongue is its organ of touch. Also, a snake uses its tongue to pick up particles and put them into two tiny cavities in the roof of its mouth which are linked with its sense of smell.

3. Yes. As a fish grows, its scales develop rings like the growth rings of a tree.

Nature Game

Our family plays a game which we would like to share with other members. For live animals seen by a member of the family or another person, we have the following points. This list could be changed for different areas of the country:

Rabbit 1	Opossum . . 6	Crane . . 11
Turtle 2	Raccoon . . . 7	Skunk . . 12
Woodchuck . 3	Fox 8	Beaver . 15
Owl 4	Deer 9	Eagle . . 25
Hawk 5	Snake 10	Bear . . . 50

Any albino counts 20 points extra. We started this game last spring and Mother keeps the family score. My three-year-old sister Julie saw a doe with twin fawns to bring her score up to 30. John, my five-year-old brother, saw a redtail hawk at the bird feeder the other day and now has 16 points. Tom, 9, has 114, Dad has 111 and Mother has 220. I once saw a mother raccoon and her two babies fishing by a creek. I now have 175 points.

We enjoy the game very much and it makes us more observant. Exciting nature is all around us. All we have to do is look!

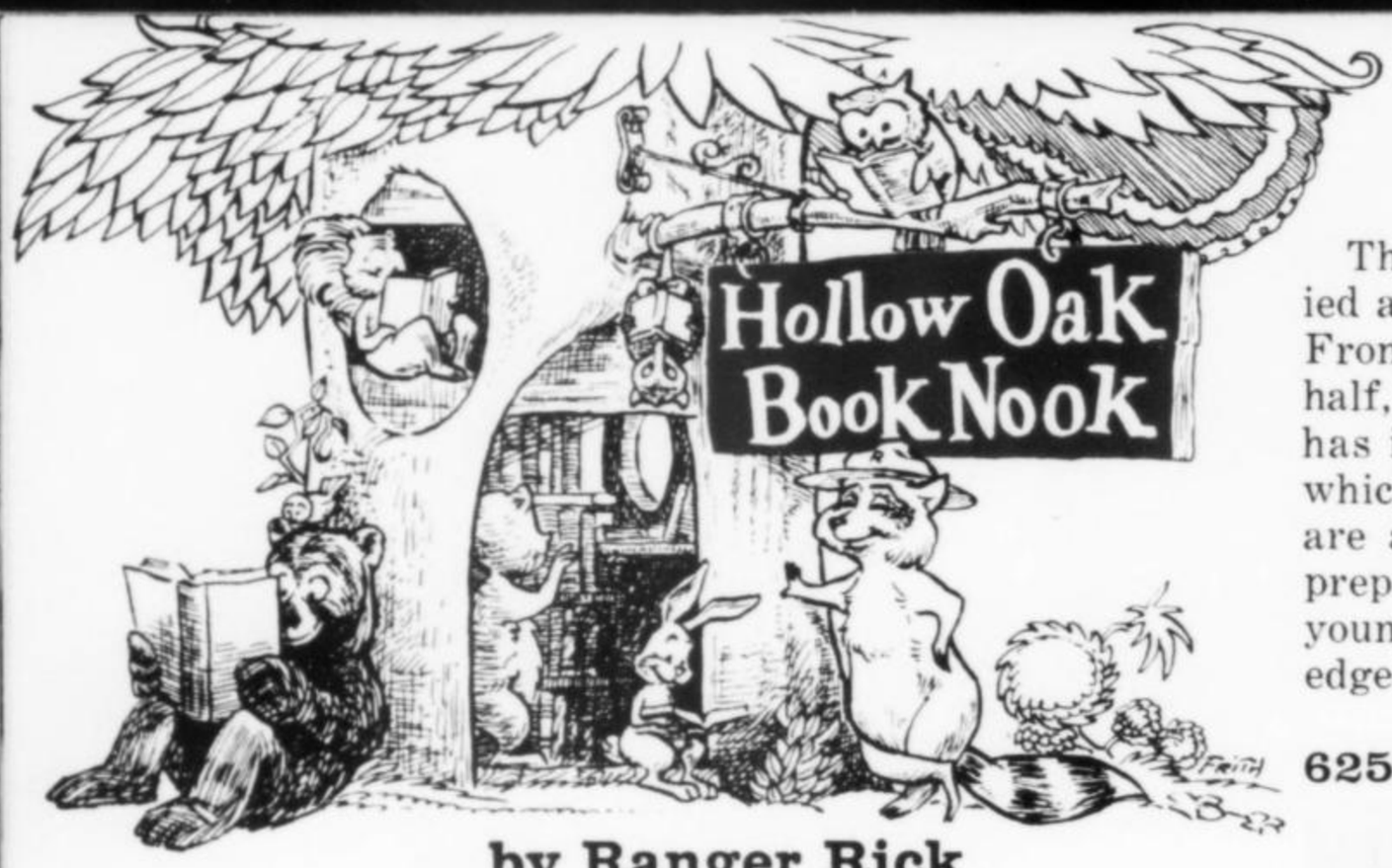
—*Mark C. Dillon, Age 10, Md.*

The Question Box

What do skunks eat?

—*Diane Marie Mendez, Calif.*

Among the skunk's preferred foods are grubs, cutworms and other caterpillars, grasshoppers, potato beetles and crickets. When insects are not plentiful, skunks eat wild fruits and berries, mice and other small mammals. Sometimes they eat the eggs and young of game birds, reptiles and amphibians or raid hen roosts, but not as often as people think.



by Ranger Rick

Hi, Rangers!

It's really been wonderful how you've been sending in requests for books from the Hollow Oak Book Nook. This month we offer four more books that the Deep Green Wood animals have particularly enjoyed.

62159—The Mighty Bears

If you've read Byron Dalrymple's interesting story about the many-colored black bear, you'll probably want to hear more about those fascinating mammals, the bears. Everyone likes to watch bears perform at the zoo or the circus. They look round and cuddly, playful and good-natured. But underneath that shaggy coat is one of the mightiest mammals on earth.

In a brand-new book called *The Mighty Bears*, Robert McClung, former Curator of Mammals and Birds at the Bronx Zoo, introduces us to each member of the bear family and tells us how it lives. Here are the North American bears – the black bear, grizzly, Alaskan brown bear, and polar bear. And here are bears from many other lands, including the bears' near relative, the giant panda.

62168—All About Animals and Their Young

Did you enjoy the photographs of animal mothers and their young in the article "Ma and Me"? Then you're sure to like *All About Animals and Their Young*, another book by Robert McClung.

The story of animals and their young is as varied and fascinating as the animals themselves. From the tiny amoeba, which simply splits in half, to the nine-banded armadillo, which always has identical quadruplets, and the sea hare, which can lay 40,000 eggs in a minute, there are amazing differences in the ways animals prepare for their babies, feed and bring up their young. Mr. McClung draws on his wide knowledge to tell their story.

62506—Kon-Tiki

Can you imagine sailing across the Pacific Ocean on a primitive raft? Well, Thor Heyerdahl did just that, and the story of his voyage is one of the most amazing adventure tales of our time.

Life on the raft was strange and wonderful. Heyerdahl and his companions were lashed by storms. They encountered incredible sea monsters like the whale shark. They were the first men ever to see a live snake mackerel. On every page of this true record, from the actual building of the raft through all the dangerous and comic adventures on the sea to the spectacular crash-landing on a native island, each reader will find a wholesome and spellbinding escape from our everyday world. And the wonderful pictures you'll find in this special illustrated edition are by themselves enough to make the book well worth having.

62177—Elsa

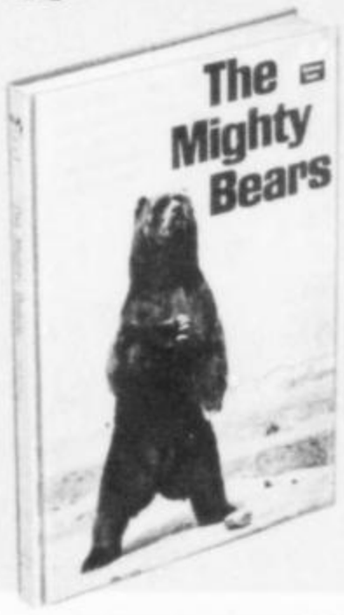
If you've seen the movie "Born Free," you know the story of Elsa, the lion cub who lived with Joy Adamson and her game warden husband in Africa.

Here is a book of wonderful photographs by Joy Adamson herself, which illustrate the tale of how the Adamsons brought Elsa up from a cub and trained her for the wild. With the pictures goes the fine story of Elsa's adventures from the day she was adopted as a tiny cub to another day four years later when she brought her own cubs out of the bush and introduced them to the Adamsons.

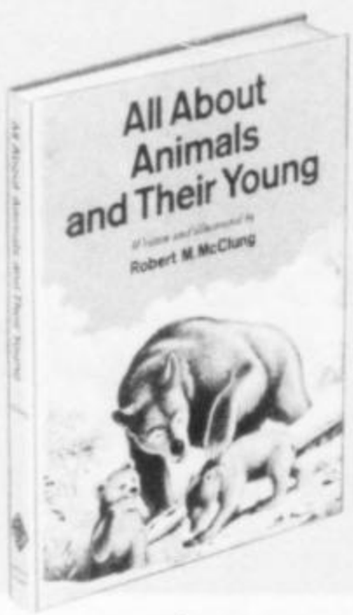
Elsa is perhaps the most famous and best-loved animal of modern times. You won't want to miss this handsome picture book.

RANGER RICK

Hollow Oak Book Nook Selections for May



62159—**THE MIGHTY BEARS**
by Robert M. McClung, illustrated with many marvelous photographs. A Gateway book for ages 7 through 11.
(Pub. Ed. $1.95) **$1.60**



62168—**ALL ABOUT ANIMALS AND THEIR YOUNG**
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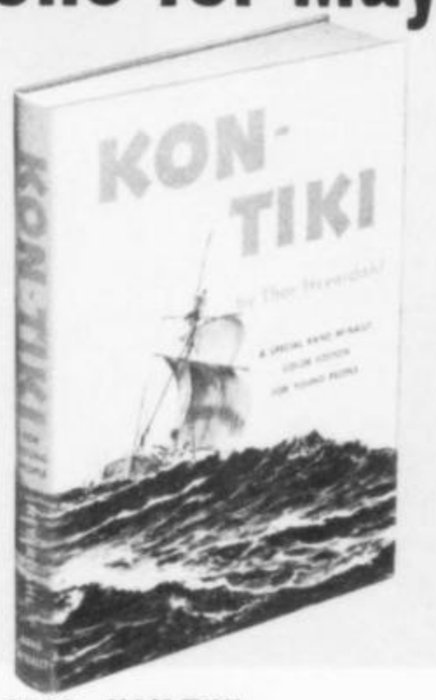

62506—**KON-TIKI: YOUNG READER'S EDITION**
by Thor Heyerdahl.
Specially adapted for young readers, and liberally illustrated in full color.
For ages 9 and up.
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62177—**ELSA**
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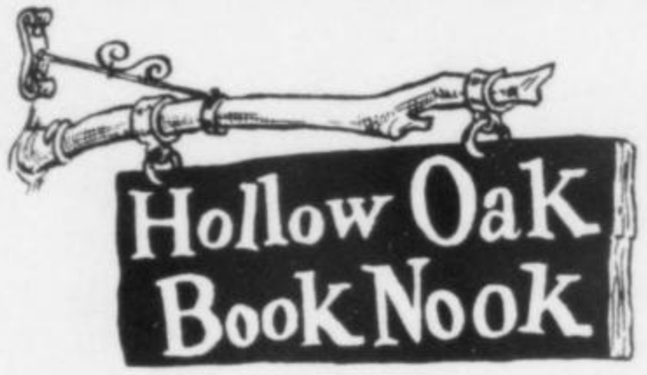

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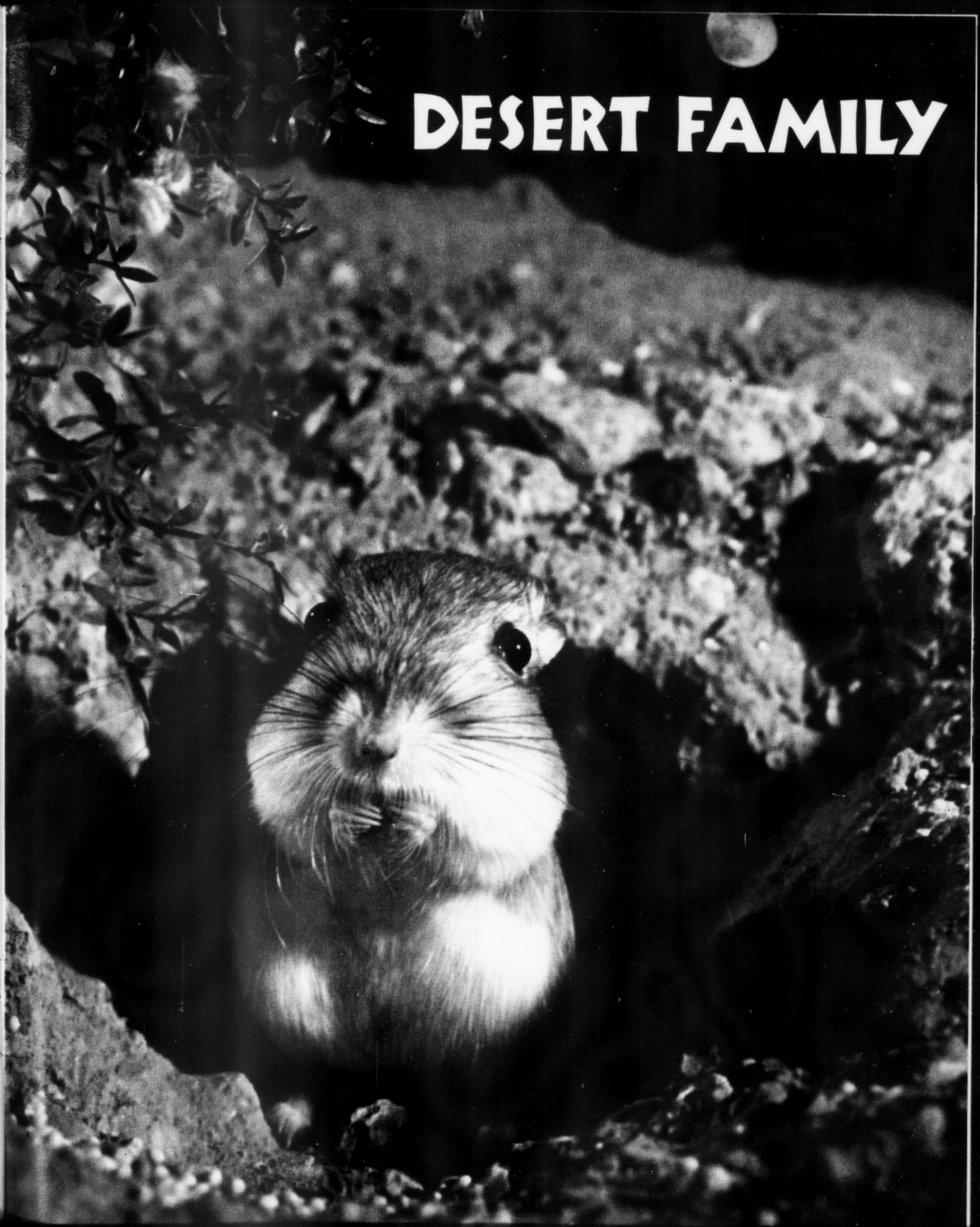
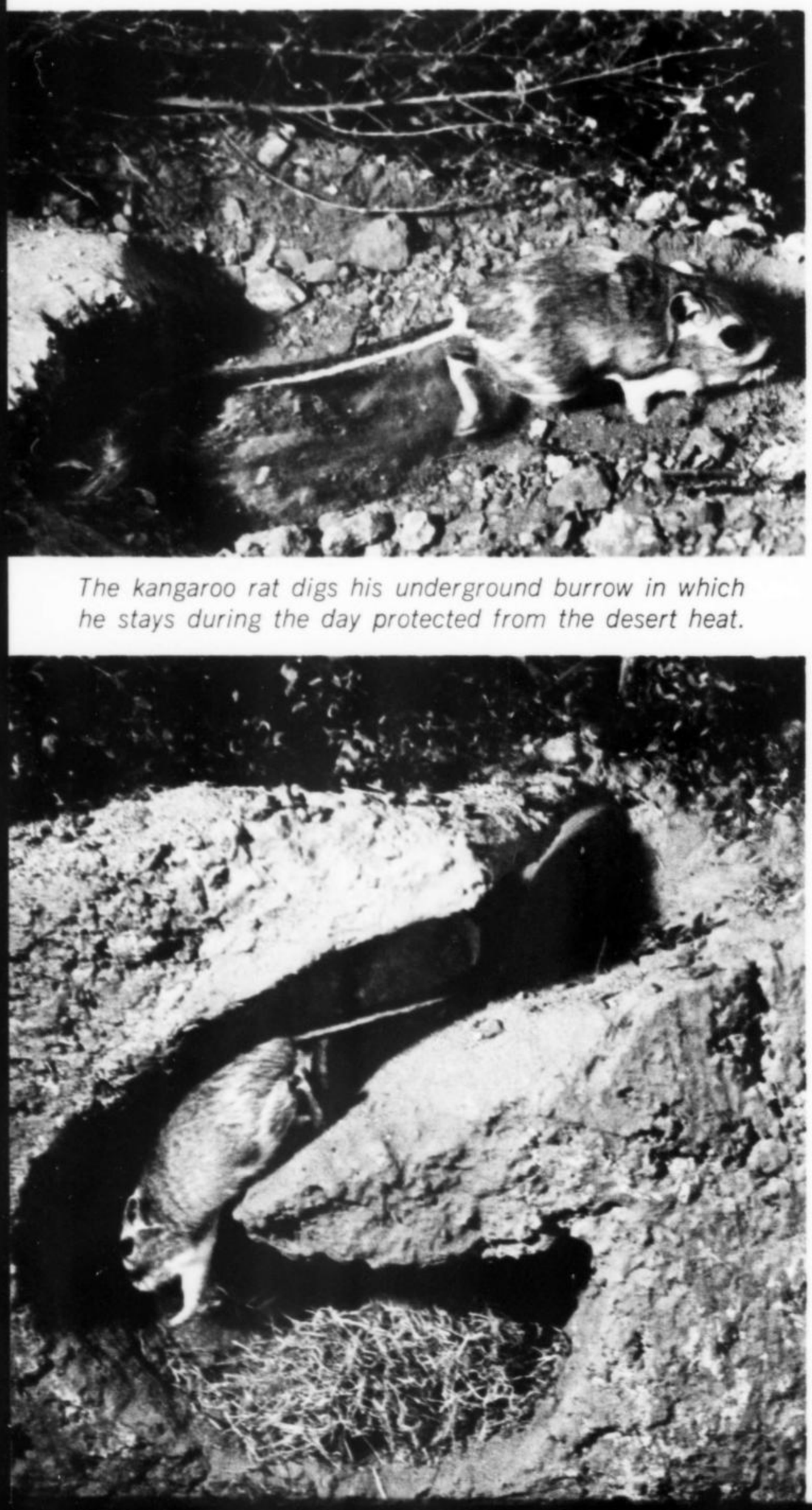

DESERT FAMILY

DESERT FAMILY

by D. A. Hoover

Photos by Willis Peterson



The kangaroo rat digs his underground burrow in which he stays during the day protected from the desert heat.

Dipo, the kangaroo rat, crept from his underground nest and carefully scraped away its sandpile barricade. He listened for a moment to the soft music of the desert night. Close behind him Domy, his little wife, whispered encouragement. For a moment he was alert, sniffing the breeze, then they both ventured out with short, timid hops. A wildcat could be behind that creosote bush or a low-skimming owl might be plummeting downward.

Hearing nothing that alarmed them, the look-alike mates peered at each other for a moment. They looked like soft, cream-colored, miniature kangaroos with snowy underparts. These velvety, dark-eyed, long-tailed children of the desert bounded away in opposite directions with no goodbyes.

Dipo hopped high on his long hind legs. Balancing with his tail he took an extra-high leap now and then so he could see any danger farther away. The "gyroscopes," or direction finders, in his enormous earbulbs told him exactly in which direction the safety of his burrow lay behind him.

Arriving at his feeding grounds, he found many different seeds, tender grass bulbs, small tubers and tasty sprouts. For salad he had wild mustard leaf and water leaf. Eating only enough to be sure it was good, he stored his treasures in his large cheek pouches, then moved on. He found the trunk of a creosote bush. To leave his trademark, he rubbed the ink-pad gland between the shoulders against it.

The great horned owl swoops down to attack his prey.

Then he suddenly became alert! Falling like a comet, a great horned owl was making an attempt to get his dinner. But Dipo leaped nimbly to one side and ducked under the spiny protection of a cactus. Now he was safe at last. He drummed his hind feet boldly mocking the disappointed owl.

He threshed a spearhead of fragrant grass seed, ate a few and pouched the rest. He found sweet leaves but passed by some red squashy berries. What neat rat would store something messy in his fur-lined pouches? He sensed something delicious under the dry sand, and found several small tubers full of much-needed moisture.

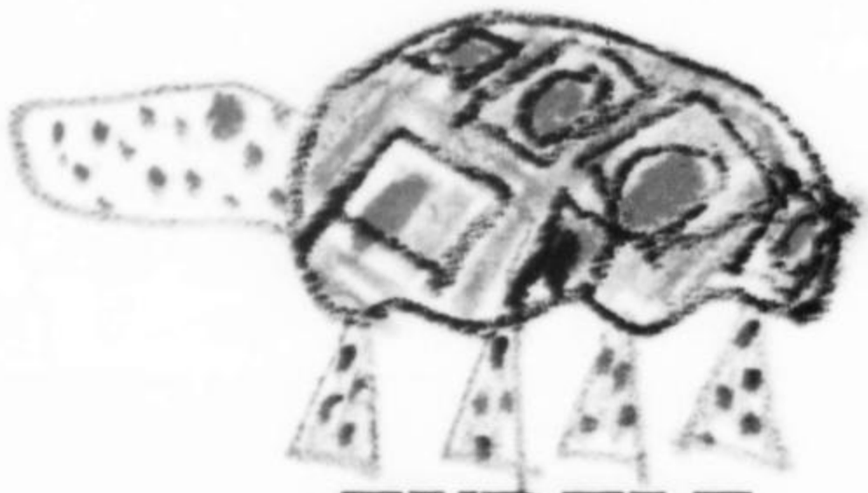
Passing the next bush, he noticed a familiar perfume. His wife had been there. It was her scent. He scuttled around the bush and there was Domy. They rubbed cheeks and twiddled whiskers in kangaroo-rat greeting.

Frolicking toward home, they heard the rasping of huge feet as a coyote sprang toward them. They bounded away in a race for their lives—five feet at a bound, five leaps per second, their tiny front feet folded tightly against their snowy chests. For a hundred yards the grim race went on, then the weary coyote sat down and bayed at the moon.

The direction finders in their earbulbs guided them to the mouth of their burrow. They stopped outside long enough to rub ink-pads on the den bush and then plunged down toward home. Dipo scratched sand into the hole to close the door for the night, and they both emptied their cheek pouches at the storeroom. They had a quiet bite before bed, then curled up to sleep. As the innocent little creatures closed their eyes, the rosy light of a new dawn began to wash the sagebrush with scarlet and gold. *The End*

THE SUMMER

OF TAMMIE'S



TURTLE

Story and photos by Nanda Ward Haynes

It was a warm spring day when seven-year-old Tammie found Tennyson Two. He was a slow-moving box turtle, a creature often seen in the New Jersey countryside. He crept slowly across a flower bed, unmindful of the path he cut through the seedlings. Delighted, Tammie pleaded to keep him. Her mother was doubtful, but agreed to let her try. Tammie watched him explore the turtle run she had created in a long cement dry-well beside the house. She sighed and said, "I hope he lives here happily ever after."

Tammie's mother sighed too. The average box turtle lives about sixty years. Tennyson Two could be around a long time!

Tennyson dined royally on baloney every other day. Turtles are cold-blooded reptiles and do not need food as often as warm-blooded animals do. Tammie put a copper penny in his drinking water to prevent soft-shell disease.

Tammie walked Tennyson daily on a harness and leash made of yarn.

All summer Tennyson was the center of Tammie's life. Her friends came to visit her *and* her turtle. They played with him on the lawn for hours.

Tammie even entered Tennyson in a race with another box turtle. When school began, Tammie took Tennyson to class.

Her teacher pointed out the brilliant markings on Tennyson's hinged shell. A box turtle, she explained, can shut himself up tightly in his shell for protection. This is why he can live so long.

In the fall Tammie learned that Tennyson needed to dig into the ground for the winter and hibernate. Set free, he splashed across the lake to the woods. *The End*

Let's Talk It Over

When the postman brings my copy of *Ranger Rick's Nature Magazine*, the first thing I do is look at the covers. These two cover photographs are so beautiful that they make me want to sit down and enjoy my new magazine at once. I begin to turn the pages right away and enjoy all of the pictures and then I look for what there is to read and do. After that, I decide where to start with a story or a project. This is a difficult decision to make because there are so many stories and projects that look interesting. What do you do when your magazine comes?

Were you as surprised as I was to learn that "black bear" is only the name of a species of bear and that many of them are also brown or blond?

Did you know that gourds are a hard-shelled fruit and that they grow in many shapes and sizes and in different colors? Also, though fruit, they are used for decoration, not for eating.

Ranger Rick has a fine idea about paper bag masks. We don't have to wait until Halloween to enjoy them. Make them for costumes when you want to be an animal or an unusual character. It is fun to make and use these at home, in school or in camp. The most important thing to remember is to make sure that the mask fits your head so that you can see through the holes for your eyes.

Did the story "Desert Family" make you think about the following things?

That a kangaroo rat is a small animal but he can jump very quickly and leap a long distance?

That kangaroo rats don't need water and therefore they can live in the desert where it is hot and dry?

That these animals stay inside their burrow home under the sand during the day and come out to get their food in the evening when it is cooler?

Since the desert is a hot, dry place, how can the kangaroo rat survive under the hot sand? To answer that question try this simple experiment at home or in school. Take two ice cubes outdoors and find a sunny spot in the yard. Dig a hole in the ground deep enough to hold one of the ice cubes. Place the cube in the hole and cover it carefully with the soil. Make sure that it is completely covered. Place the other ice cube on top of the ground nearby. See how long it takes for the ice cube on top of the ground to melt. Then uncover the hole where you put the other ice cube. You may be surprised at what you find. Under the top layer of hot sand or soil it is quite cool and comfortable even on a very hot day in the desert.

Miss Frances

Photo credits: Inside front cover of wood thrush by Jack Dermid; Inside back cover of grasshopper by Louis Quitt, Photo Researchers, Inc.; Back cover of moose by Grant Heilman.

A Letter to a Grasshopper

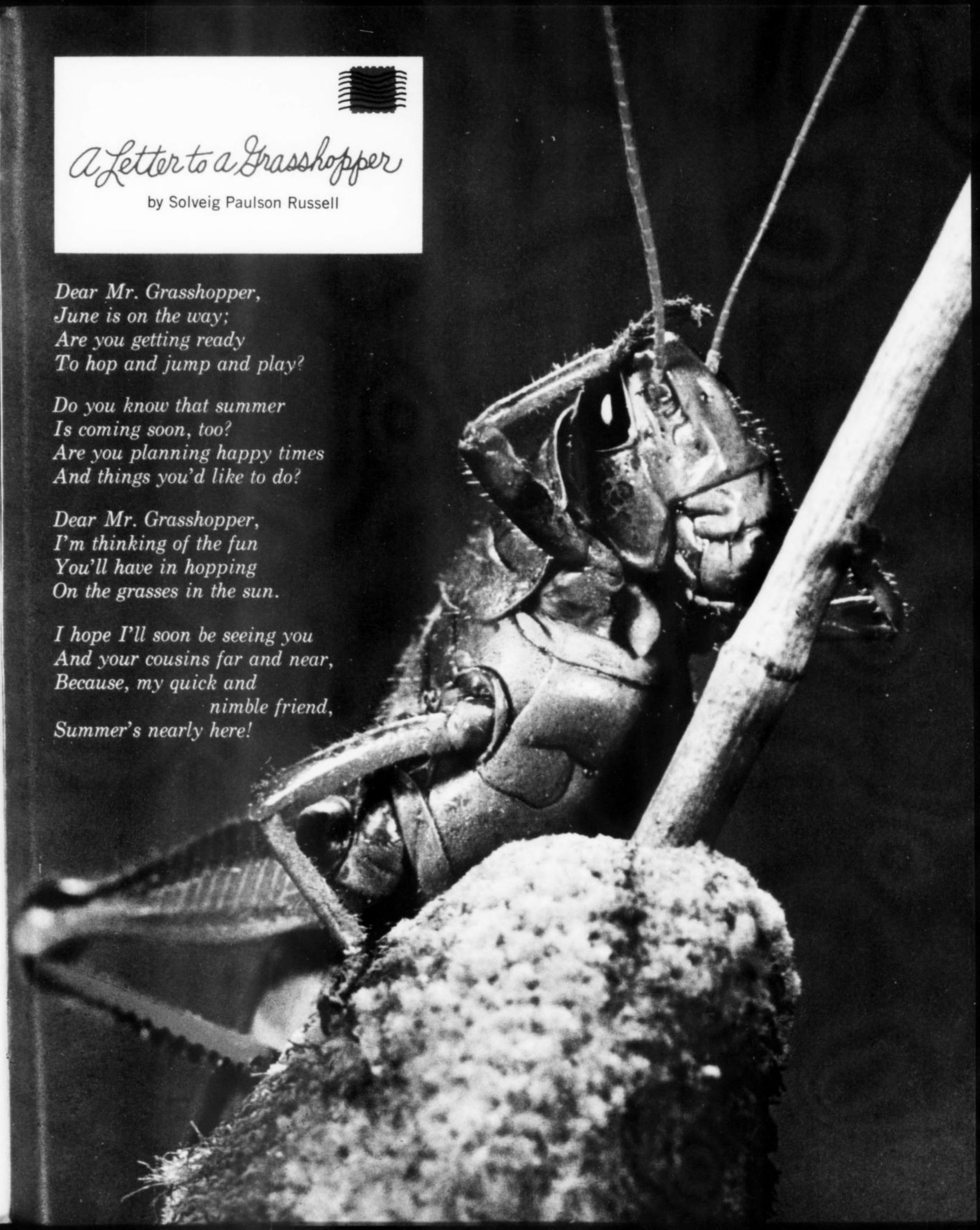
by Solveig Paulson Russell

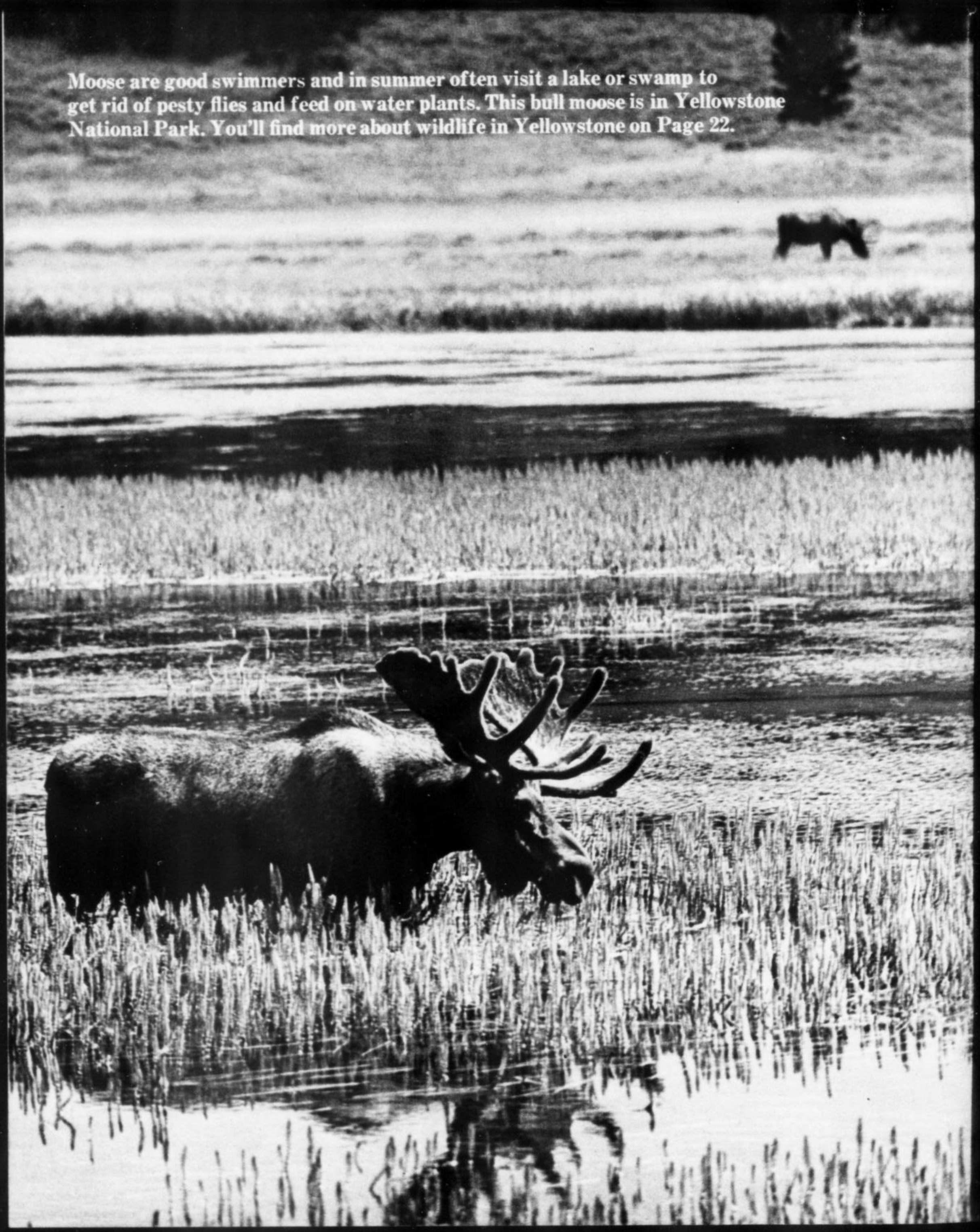
Dear Mr. Grasshopper,
June is on the way;
Are you getting ready
To hop and jump and play?

Do you know that summer
Is coming soon, too?
Are you planning happy times
And things you'd like to do?

Dear Mr. Grasshopper,
I'm thinking of the fun
You'll have in hopping
On the grasses in the sun.

I hope I'll soon be seeing you
And your cousins far and near,
Because, my quick and
nimble friend,
Summer's nearly here!





Moose are good swimmers and in summer often visit a lake or swamp to get rid of pesty flies and feed on water plants. This bull moose is in Yellowstone National Park. You'll find more about wildlife in Yellowstone on Page 22.